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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

BY
D. WALKER BROWN

PORTRAITS DRAWN BY D. L. WILSON, J. G. MURRAY,
WILLIAM FINDLAY, AND FORREST NIVEN

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PREFATORY NOTE.

MANY of the sketches contained within this volume have appeared from time to time in various magazines. They deal with the lives and literary labours of writers, for the most part, native to Clydeside; the exceptions being litterateurs, who by long residence and association, have a claim to be included in the list. By the majority the heat and burden of the day has been spent amidst the turmoil and worry of commercial or professional life, and their literary efforts are the outcome of the scant leisure enjoyed after business hours. If the biographical sketches and extracts given be the means of fostering a closer intimacy with the works of those writers, the aim and object of the book will be achieved,

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CLYDESIDE LITTERATEURS.

ROBERT BIRD.



'TIS well nigh nineteen hundred years since rude shepherds in the silent mid-night, as they watched their flocks on Bethlehem's fair green plains, suddenly found themselves surrounded by a light that was not of earth and heard a voice proclaiming in their ears—Be not afraid, for

I bring you good tidings of great joy, to all people. Jesus is born to-day in Bethlehem, and this is how you will know Him. You will find Him, a little child, wrapped in babes' clothes, and lying in a manger, and then the grandest anthem of the ages came to their wondering ears—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."

Since then with the roll of years comes the Christmas Song of the herald-angels, when man instinctively forgives his fellow the wrong that has been done, and kindlier feelings throb in the heart of humanity. It came as the song of deliverance to the Gentiles, the despised of the haughty Jews; it gave tongues of surpassing eloquence to rude, unlearned fishermen who had left their nets on fair Galilee's shore to follow the humble Carpenter whose words seemed so strange and yet so true; the sons and daughters of India have forsaken their sacred river and turned with yearning eyes to the healing, satisfying powers that were embodied in the waters of Jordan; the dusky African has listened with bated breath and loosened the grip of his implements of war as the Livingstones and Moffats of the Missionary field retold of the love of the lowly Nazarene for every man, whatever his creed, whatever his race; it has imbued tender maidens with a strength not their own when either death or the renunciation of that blessed Name was in the cup; and it has supported the stern Fathers of the Covenant when hunted like beasts on their native wilds.

'Tis a tale that is old yet ever new, and children gather round their parents' knee, crying,

"Tell me the old, old story
Of Jesus and His love;"

and even men who do not recognise the Divine Son-ship of Jesus are agreed in admitting Him to be the purest being who trod this earth of ours, the fairest Son ever born of woman.

In almost every land, from sea to sea, there is read the story of that wondrous Life, the closing scenes of which form the most awful tragedy this world's stage has ever seen.

In our own tongue the story has been told and retold, and with every rendering we discover new beauties in the music, that, from the cradle to the grave, has been the song of our Fatherland.

Mr. Robert Bird, is the author of a very beautiful setting of the life of the lowly Nazarene. "Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth," by a Layman, (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Limited, 1890,) is what is borne on the title-page of this unique and valuable work.

The volume has won for itself golden opinions from the highest authorities in the land, and some six years ago was re-issued in a more popular form, simultaneously in this country and America, the same publishers being responsible for the London edition, and Messrs. Charles Scribner & Son, having care of the New York issue.

"This life is written," as the author says in his preface, "in short realistic pictures, endeavouring to avoid theology and sectarianism, that mothers of all creeds may read it to their children, and that children in later life may read it for themselves."

The book is made up of one hundred and fifty short chapters, representing each a scene in the life of our Lord; and at the close of every chapter, the main features are gathered up into a handful, as it were, and presented to the child, as a kind of golden text, containing the germs of the part, fit to be carried away and remembered by little ones of the meanest intelligence.

We have heard some of our best preachers say that the most difficult task they had to perform, was to hold the attention, for any length of time, of an audience composed of children. The difficulty lies in combining simplicity with attractiveness, and therein is to be found Mr. Bird's strength, and, consequently, the popularity of his book.

Mr. Bird is a member of the Society of Friends, and that he is a close student of John Greenleaf Whittier, the grand Quaker-poet of the world—to whom, by the way, the volume is dedicated—we need scarcely be told, for the short graphic pictures that are contained within these covers teem with quaint poetic prose that lends a charm to its every page.

It reads as the work of one who knows his theme intimately, line upon line, precept upon precept, and, who, gathering his children round him had proceeded to tell the story of old in his own way, ever bearing in mind the capacities of his hearers, and who, gifted with a healthy imagination, and an unmistakable poetic faculty, could picture the scenes in

the great life-drama so forcibly as to leave the little one's with but one desire, and that, that he would turn over the next leaf and read on. As we peruse the volume there is a feeling of freshness in the telling of the story—as if we were hearing of things that happened but yesterday—that is very charming.

Four years ago Mr. Bird published a booklet entitled "A Child's Religion," where, in fourteen short chapters, the Way of Life is explained in all the simplicity of language so characteristic of the author.

Last year "Joseph the Dreamer," a most important work—a work which we feel sure will add very much to the literary reputation of Mr. Bird—was published by Longmans, Green & Co., 1895. The story of Joseph as therein portrayed becomes as engrossing as a novel, and one is fain to add fuel to the fire and see the end out before we can decide to close the book. Very encouraging reports have lately come from the American publishers, and "Joseph" is likely soon to call for the steady demand that is found to exist for "Jesus the Carpenter." We lately had the perusal of a letter written by a youthful reader of these two important works, thanking the author for his books, and asking him to open new ground in the same direction. Such is the praise that is sweet to the author and gives the greatest encouragement for future effort.

Mr. Bird is a native of Govan, having been born there in 1854. He was educated in Glasgow, passing through the curriculum of a law student at our University, where he gained a prize in the English Literature class for a poem on the "Glasgow Statue to Burns," as well as obtaining honours in Scotch Law. He passed as a procurator in 1878, and immediately thereafter joined his father in practice in our own city, with which firm he is still connected.

His first attempts at verse, of any account, were contributed to the columns of *Quiz*, and for long the pages of that journal were enhanced and enlivened by the appearance, from time to time, of these clever and happy "Law Lyrics," under which heading many a sly, pawky hit was given at the legal profession and its luminaries. Of ill-humour or snarling criticism, there was never a breath in these bright rhyming sallies, and when a finger was raised, it was but to

poke fun in a good-humoured way, now at the manifest inadequacy of some of our statutes, or anon at the frailties of his brethren of the gown and wig.

For long the authorship of the "Law Lyrics" formed a subject of speculation, and when a collection of these poems, along with others of general interest, was published by Messrs. Wilson & Cormack in 1885, under the same title, and still anonymously, one or two of the "knowing ones" among the critics felt certain that the new poet was to be found on the bench; that the writer was connected with the legal profession could be determined by a glance at the book.

It has been admitted on all hands that nothing better in the same vein has been written since the days of Outram and Neaves.

To those who have been drawn into the toils of litigation, and who have a lively recollection of little save their defeat, and the agent's account, the following verse taken from "The Table o' Fees," will be readily appreciated. For happy humour and as showing a free and easy gift of versification in the vernacular, we consider it the cleverest stanza in Mr. Bird's legal verse:—

Man ! it gangs wi' a clack !
 Like a mill makin' flour ;
 Three-and-fourpence a crack !
 Six-and-eightpence an hour !
 Half-a-crown for a wink,
 And a shilling a sneeze,
 Come like stour o' sma' ink
 Frae the Table o' Fees.

His poems entitled "The Landlord's Hypothec," "The Sheriff-Substitute's Lament," and "New Year's Song for Counsel," all touch, in felicitous terms, the humours as well as the anomalies of the legal profession. Now it is the administration from the bench, or it may be the statutes themselves, and when Mr. Bird speaks of weak or faulty legislation, he does it not in any mim-mouthed fashion, but aims straight from the shoulder, and for the moment the lawyer is submerged in the man, not a word being softened nor a tone modified in consideration of his own connection with the profession.

Some of our author's other poems are worthy the genius of Scotia's pride—the Ploughman-Bard of Ayr. Take, for

instance, Mr. Bird's verses addressed to "The Sparrow." Every line shows a mind keenly alive to the hardy, plucky nature of his little feathered friend which gives that rakish, I-know-no-care swagger to his pert, though at times ragged little tail. The author of the inimitable lines "To a Mouse" would have shaken hands with a warm sympathetic grasp, over the recital of this one poem of Mr. Bird's. We quote here a few verses.

Brown-backit, dusty-breasted chappie !
 Wi' streakit throat, and pow sae nappy,
 Wi' sturdy legs and neb sae rappy
 For fechtin's splore ;
 Thy cheery chirp mak's a' things happy
 About my door.

.
 Gi'e finches fine their music mellow,
 Gi'e blackbirds trig their nebs o' yellow
 The redbreast, too—the sodger fellow—
 His sang sae sma' ;
 In clatterin' noisome chorus bellow
 Thou dings them a'.

But haud ! I dinna like thy fechtin',
 Whan, breast tae breast, hot war thou'rt wechtin'
 Strivin' wi' hangin' wings tae strechtin'
 On yird thy foe ;
 Crumbs fa' for a', and nebs fast dichtin',
 Work endless woe !

Mr. Bird's volume of "Law Lyrics," has achieved a very decided success.

"The Falls of Clyde," and other poems by the same author, was published, also by Mr. Gardner, in 1888.

The "Fairy Pieces for Children" which form a part of this volume are very beautiful, and display a delicate touch that accords with the light, gossamer-like tripping of the inhabitants of the elfin world.

COLIN RAE-BROWN.



Colin Rae Brown

IT chanced the other day that business carried us to Greenock and within hail of that old Churchyard, known over the wide world as being the burial place of all that was mortal of Burns' "Highland Mary," the third

anniversary of whose death sent the poet out into the solitude of a clear, moon-lit night, where he was found, stretched on a heap of straw, gazing in pensive and reflective memory at the star-studded canopy, composing within his soul that deathless ode to the "dear departed shade" of his "Mary in Heaven."

Two stones are erected over this grave in the West Church Yard at Greenock, one, the oldest, being placed there in 1760. Over the date are to be seen, cut out in the stone, figures emblematic of the ship-carpenter's vocation, while the inscription indicates that "This burying-place belongs to Peter M'Pherson, ship-carpenter in Greenock, and Mary Campbell his *spouse* and their children;" these being the relatives (Uncle and Aunt) with whom Burns' betrothed was staying when she took ill and died. Behind that is seen the handsome stone erected by public subscription, and which bears, from the chisel of our own Mossman, sculptured figures of the bard and his Mary as they joined hands by the stream on that day of their final parting.

Close by this historic grave we found the burial place of the ancestors of the subject of our sketch. There, too, we found an ancient stone bearing date 1798, and purporting to be the burying place of James Rea, shipmaster, Greenock, that being the name of Mr. Rae-Brown's maternal grandfather; the name Rea, we presume, accounting for the more euphonious prefix "Rae" adopted by our subject. There was something not inappropriate, we thought, in the fact that side by side with the last resting-place of one so dear to the heart of Robert Burns, should lie the ancestors of a man whose love and reverence for our national poet, whose unyielding advocacy of the rights and liberties of the people, and, above all, whose patriotism, no one will gainsay.

Mr. Colin Rae-Brown is a son of the late James Brown, shipmaster, Greenock, and was born in that port in December, 1821. He received his early education in his native town, but in his tenth year the family removed to Glasgow. In his twentieth year he obtained an interest in the firm of Messrs. Murray, Stewart & Co. of Paisley, and, as junior partner, became responsible for the management of their Greenock branch, then opened. At that time he became interested, with others, in the movement for erecting a

monument over the grave of "Highland Mary," to which reference has already been made.

In the year 1844 he formed one of the deputation from Greenock to meet the sons of the Bard at Alloway on that memorable sixth day of August, when he saw the sons of Robert Burns, and was introduced to the renowned Professor Wilson, "Christopher North."

After that he came back to Glasgow to take up the responsible duties of business manager for the proprietor of the *North British Daily Mail*.

About the same time Mr. Rae-Brown made the acquaintance of Thomas de Quincey, who was asked to reside in Glasgow in order to be at hand as a contributor to *Tait's Magazine*, just bought by the proprietor of the *Mail*, and transferred to Glasgow from the Capital. De Quincey and our subject became intimately acquainted, and Mr. Brown's first volume of verse, "Lyrics of Sea and Shore," was dedicated to the famous essayist.

Along with some others, Mr. Rae-Brown published in 1855 the first number of the *Glasgow Daily Bulletin*, the first penny daily newspaper sold in Britain, and which existed till the year 1861, when—the other papers being all reduced by that time to the humble copper—it was amalgamated with a contemporary.

From the memoir of the author of "The Dawn of Love"—to which we are indebted for our biographical particulars—we learn that Mr. Colin Rae-Brown in the year 1856 set on foot the movement for the erection of the National Wallace Monument on the Abbey Craig at Stirling, and which, for miles around forms the commanding figure on the landscape. For years, indeed up till he removed to the Metropolis, Mr. Rae-Brown was chairman of the Executive, and Convener of the Building Committee in connection with this great national movement.

Early in the summer of 1858, at a dinner given to the employés and agents of the *Daily Bulletin* at the Brig o' Doon Hotel, the subject of our article gave further proof of his love of Burns and of everything Scottish, when, in proposing "The Memory of Burns," he concluded his speech by suggesting a great National Demonstration to take place on the approaching 25th of January, the Centenary of the birth

of the Bard, the result being that in Scotland 676 meetings were held, in England 76, in Ireland 10, in the Colonies 48, in the United States 61, and Copenhagen added one more to the magnificent total of 872.

In 1868 he inaugurated the London Burns Club; and three years later, in co-operation with a few of the original members of that association, Dr. Charles Mackay, George Cruickshank and others, he formed one of a committee constituted in London to raise funds for finally completing the Scott Monument at Edinburgh, the amount of £800 resulting from their labours.

He was also interested in the movement that resulted in the placing of the Burns Statue on the Thames Embankment.

Mr. Colin Rae-Brown's first volume, as already mentioned, was "Lyrics of Sea and Shore." Following that came "Lays and Lyrics" in 1859. "The Dawn of Love," came from the press in 1862; an edition *de luxe* being published in 1873. These were followed by "Noble Love," in 1871. In the year 1874 he contributed to the *St. James' Magazine* a series of articles entitled "Glimpses of Scottish Life," which essays have since been gathered together and issued in three volume form by Messrs. Sampson, Low & Co., London.

Colin Rae-Brown, besides being a poet of no mean order, has written some interesting and clever serial stories, viz., "The Wolf in the Fold," "The Head of the Clan," etc.

The quotations which we now make are from a selection of his published works, issued some few years ago in one volume by Mr. Alexander Gardner of Paisley and London.

Colin Rae-Brown's pen has ever been ready to champion the cause of right, and the thought of oppression has always added gall to the ink.

A study of life and death in the slums brought forth these lines, part of a poem bearing the heading "Starved to Death;" bringing before our mental vision a phase of life that even to-day cries with loud and clamant voice in the ear of Christian philanthropy. If these cries penetrated oftener the walls of the private room where sits the employer who offers these miserable pittances to out-door workers, there would be less need for charitable doles, and less sapping of the independent spirit of the poor, for when self-respect is

gone, 'tis too often alas, an easy transition to paths of crime.
But listen while the poet draws the picture for himself—

Nothing was left save a tatter'd shawl
To cover her poor shrunk form withal—
Shiv'ring with cold, while her burning skin
Told of the fever that rag'd within.
She had stitched all night, twelve farthings won,
And the sand of her life seemed all but run.

She died that night. When the next day dawned,
In search of the shirts—which were *not* pawned—
Came one who seemed callous, yet almost wept
Over her, who now her death-sleep slept :
Death always cold, breathed so chilly *there*—
Over the corpse, the stool, and the old arm-chair !

Mr. Rae-Brown has ever been strong in patriotic verse. He has written with fine sympathy and admiration of "Our Mariners," "Our Soldiers and our Sailors." A very pretty song of his is entitled "The Trooper's Bride."

It is not surprising that one who reverences the name of Robert Burns and who has done so much to honour the Bard's name and to perpetuate his memory, should have wrought at white heat when that glorious son of Ayrshire was the theme. The lines we quote is the closing verse of his song, "The Land of Burns."

Then let us pledge the Land o' Burns !
Where Freedom's Psalm was sung,
In days when Might was more than Right,
And Libertie was young.
The Charter then of Honest Worth
Was granted to the world,
And downward from its shatter'd throne
The pride of Rank was hurled !

Then let us pledge the Land o' Burns,
So loyal and so free
Where Wallace bled, and Robin sang
Of Love and Libertie."

His best known song is his "Bonnie Invermay" which is published to music by Mr. John Blockly, London. The lines run sweetly and gracefully in liquid tones, and we are not surprised at its popularity. We quote it in full.

BONNIE INVERMAY.

I've roamed afar where'er the star
 Of Fortune guided me,
 But till this day, sweet Invermay,
 I've ne'er forgotten thee.
 Time rolls along while sigh and song
 In swift succession flow,
 For smiles and tears, and hopes and fears
 Are all of life we know :

Yet dear to me shall ever be
 The joy of life's young day,
 And still shall I, till mem'ry die,
 Love Bonnie Invermay !

I love the glens, the rocky glens
 Of our romantic land :
 I love her hills, her heath'ry hills
 And mountains sternly grand.
 O for the days, the happy days
 When Hope's bright cup ran o'er !
 But all in vain I sigh again—
 They'll gladden me no more.

Yet dear to me, etc.

I love the streams, the bounding streams
 That Echo loves to greet,
 That dance and play and fall in spray
 Like diamonds at our feet ;
 And should Fate's star lead me afar—
 Or strew my path with care—
 Till sorrows grow and ages snow
 Hath whiten'd every hair—

Yet dear to me, etc.

JOHN BROWN.



John Brown

MR. JOHN BROWN is essentially a song writer, a great number of his songs having been set to music, and become very popular.

He is a native of this city, having seen the light early in the fifties. He was educated in Glasgow.

His father who was a well-known restaurateur in our midst,

was a gentleman possessed of decided musical talent ; and in the early days of his business in Queen Street, he might have been found in the little back room at the close of the day, with a few congenial souls, and an intent listener would have heard the sweet voice of the proprietor as he regaled his friends in soft tones with a verse from one of their favourite lyrics ; for the little company comprised some of the most genuine poets of the time. There was William Miller, whom Robert Buchanan felicitously termed the "Laureate of the Nursery ;" William Cameron, the author of "Meet me on the gowan lea," and that beautiful song "Morag's Fairy Glen," and many other fine lyrics ; William C. Cameron, the shoemaker poet, whose fine lines, "I'm happier than a King," are not nearly so well known as they deserve to be, and Andrew Park, whose stirring songs, "Hurrah for the Highlands," and "Where has Scotland found her fame," have made the Scottish blood leap in our veins. These were the men whom John Brown, when a lad, found in his father's company, and little wonder that the poetic faculty was early stirred within him, for we learn that his first lines which appeared in print, were written when he was fourteen years of age.

His father's poet-friends were quick to note the rhyming proclivities of the son, and predicted that the coming years would bring, at least, local fame to his name.

His first volume entitled "Song Drifts" was published in 1874, a second edition appearing some years later.

"Wayside Songs," his second volume of verse, was published in 1883, and like "Song Drifts" has been so popular as to call for a second edition, which appeared in 1887 from the press of Messrs. Frederick W. Wilson & Brother, Glasgow.

Even a superficial glance through a volume of Mr. Brown's poems would reveal the musical tastes and inclinations of the writer. Every line teems with musical cadences, not a false note being found within the compass of the volume. It will not surprise the reader then, to learn that our poet is also an accomplished player on the pianoforte, indeed, his first experiences of life were gained in the musical profession, though of late years his time and energies have been devoted to purely commercial pursuits.

While in the musical profession he wrote the music as well as the words of many popular songs, "Love's Legacy" and "Golden Links" being especial favourites.

In collaboration with a friend Mr. Brown wrote a Comedietta entitled "Both of them" which was played in our own Royalty by The "Barrister" Company in the year 1889.

The reader of the following lines, taken from Mr. Brown's poem, entitled, "Lochar Burn," need scarcely be told that the writer of them is a worshipper at the shrine of Wordsworth. Lochar Burn is a Renfrewshire stream just about a mile from where the poet lived at Bridge of Weir.

What time the cuckoo's note is heard—
More like a spirit than a bird—
And all the woodland choir is out,
And winds in happy chorus shout,
And laughing over bank and brae
The sunbeams with thy waters play.
Sweet Lochar Burn ! then is the time
For cadenced thought and rippled rhyme ;
Then is the time to track with thee
The rocky pass, the daisied lea,
And in a dream of sunshine gain
A music from thy liquid strain.

These are the thoughts of one who has trod his way in the peopled solitudes of the wood, by the devious windings of the stream, when the heart becomes surcharged with that intense love of Nature, which, as in the acquisition of some great joy, leaves the heart too full for words, when our thoughts have to wait for expression till the time of more sober after memory.

To the lover of Nature, the gently murmuring brook has ever held infinite charms. It accords with his quiet moods as it flows in its shallows, gently lipping the shiny pebbles on its banks. Or does he feel life throbbing strongly within his veins as in the heyday of youth, then the stream is with him as it wildly dashes over the linn and boils in the cauldron below. Mr. Brown has often given fine expression to the thoughts that are called up by the rippling burn.

In these lines of his the poet rises to the conception of a fine figure that suggests indeed the wail of Burns when he cried—

Tho' this was fair, an' that was braw,
 And yon the toast of a' the toun,
 I sighed, and said amang them a',
 Ye are na Mary Morison

Mr. Brown gives us the thought in these beautiful lines—

Oh ! burnie that rins to the ocean,
 Gae, carry a message frae me,
 And simmer that flees ower the waters,
 Oh ! hasten my lad ower the sea ;
 For weel, weel I ken a' yer wilings,
 And loe ye sae bonnie and braw.
 But where is the bliss of yer sang and yer kiss
 When shared na wi' him that's awa' ?

His lines entitled "The Ripple o' the Burnie" are indeed a true photograph of Nature, as seen by the eye of the observant student whose sympathies are keenly alive to the many impressions of the surroundings of a moorland stream.

THE RIPPLE O' THE BURNIE.

THE ripple o' the burnie
 Is rinnin' in my dreams,
 The sun-licht o' thy beauty
 Ower a' my mem'ry streams.

A blossom frae thy woodlands,
 A message brings to me,
 And simmer breathes aboot my heart,
 Because it thinks o' thee.
 And lang, lang be thy simmer,
 And sweet the langest day,
 Where sunbeams glint and shimmer
 On the burnie and the brae.

The din and smoke o' cities,
 The jostle o' the crowd,
 The smirk and sneer o' envy,
 The flauntings o' the proud,
 Can neither please nor tease me,
 Awaké nor silence glee,
 For peace lies ever in the heart
 That is possessed o' thee.

For mine's nae love to blossom,
 Then fade when cauld winds blaw,
 Nae bird to seek thy simmer bower,
 Then leave thee 'mid the snaw.
 But heart to heart ance plighted,
 Whatever may befa',

The love that brightened simmer hours
 Shall shield thee 'mid the snaw.
 And lang, lang be thy simmer,
 And sweet the langest day,
 Where sunbeams glint and shimmer
 On the burnie and the brae.

Mr. Brown's muse seldom runs into a humorous strain. In his lines entitled "Love tirl'd at the window," however, there is a pawkiness that suggests capabilities in that direction. We quote four lines—

Love tirl'd at the window,
 Love tirl'd at the door—
 I said 'E'en let the loon depart,
 He's cheated me afore.'

In the second edition of "Wayside Songs," there are added about a dozen poems, some of which are very fine. One of these poems, entitled "Birds in Winter," contains a thought and an admonition that is much needed, and we quote one verse, in the hope that it may remain with us in the memory through the dreary winter months, and be the means of prompting kindly deeds.

BIRDS IN WINTER.

WHEN nor'land winds with drifting snow
 Blow o'er the cheerless lea,
 When scarce the sun peeps o'er the hill
 Our still white world to see,
 Think of the needy pensioners
 That gather round your door,
 Who had no swallow-wings to fly
 To some sweet sunny shore ;
 Who linger, true of heart, with note
 More eloquent than words ;
 Then gather up the crumbs that fall
 And feed the hungry birds.

There are many thoughts worthy our study and consideration in the following lines by Mr. Brown, and these will make a grand "last word" to our sketch.

TAK' TIME BY THE FORELOCK.

TAK' time by the forelock, for weel dae we ken
 There's naething ahint tae haud on tae ;
 The auld wrinkled body mak's auld wrinkled men
 Before they can weel get their haun tae.

If spring disna see ye awa' at the pleugh,
There's little ye'll show for the reaping ;
And the man, faith ! that winna be up at it noo
Micht as weel in the kirkyard be sleeping.

It's the stream swiftly flowing that keeps aff the frost,
And the friction that keeps aff the rust, man ;
And they gather aye weel wha let naething be lost,
And the rest leave tae Heaven in trust, man.
We maun dae whatsoever oor haun finds tae dae,
And dae it wi' heart and wi' micht, man ;
And though rough be the road and though weary the way,
'Tis a pillow o' peace when comes nicht, man.

It's no what we've won and it's no what we've lost,
But what was oor end and oor aim, man ;
Though we start up Dame Fortune the trail may be crossed,
And we beat aboot losing the game, man.
But if we haud on tae the end o' the road,
And work as oor faithers before, man,
There's a Hand that will lichten the heart o' its load,
And a Hame, although death be the door, man.

WILLIAM CANTON.



IT is given some men to possess a most fertile imagination, and, like Sir Walter Scott, as their eye wanders over the miscellaneous collection of a dealer in antique wares, each suit of armour is immediately filled with the form of

some ancient warrior : the old time pattern of finger rings are seen to adorn the hand of "ye ladye faire of high degree" as she stands on the turret wall bidding her brave knight adieu on his departure for the wars : or, if articles of apparel of more modern date, as with Charles Dickens, the clothes are seen to cover the form of a *Sam Weller*, a *Pecksniff*, or a *Mark Tapley*.

If, with this power of imagination, there have been given opportunities of travel, then every day's new sights and sounds but add to the storehouse of scenes and events which may be recalled at will. If we may add to all this a love of history and of legendary lore—the romantic in history : and if, to crown the edifice, have been added the mind and soul of a poet, then we may presume we have a prototype of Mr. William Canton : only in his case the imagination would have lost sight of the suit of armour, and been peering through the dim vista of centuries long gone, picturing the prehistoric time when armour was a thing unknown, and man fought pretty much in nature's garb, or the jewels, might have suggested such a picture as we find in his closing lines of "The Legend of the Ark :"

While the long billows, passing one by one,
Lifted and lowered in the crimson blaze
A dead queen of the old and evil days.
One gold-clasped arm lay beautiful and bare ;
The gold of power gleamed in her floating hair.

Professor Max Muller, speaking of Mr. Canton, has said, "If you would form a true idea of his character and his intellectual powers, I should ask you to read some of his poems, particularly those on classical subjects. I look upon them as equal to Matthew Arnold's poems, and having been an old friend and sincere admirer of Arnold's, I could give no higher praise."

The assassination of Sir Alexander Burnes, a descendant of our National Bard, and of Sir Wm. Macnaughten, at Cabul, were fresh in the minds of the British people, and our war with China was but a thing of yesterday, when William Canton was born (1845) in the Island of Chusan, on the east coast of China ; one of the first Chinese possessions captured by the British forces in the Opium War of 1840.

His early boyhood was spent in the very antipodes of his birthplace, namely, in the Island of Jamaica, and his education was received in sunny France.

After some years spent in literary and educational work in England and Scotland, he received his first journalistic appointment of importance as editor of the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*.

This was followed some years later by promotion to a sub-editorship on the staff of the *Glasgow Daily Herald*.

That responsible position Mr. Canton filled with every credit to himself, and to the entire satisfaction of his chief, till the year 1891, when the proprietors of Isbister & Co. Limited, invited him to accept the management of their publishing business. This position carries with it the sub-editorship of the *Contemporary Review* and *Good Words*. Since then the force and refinement of Mr. Canton's facile and classic pen have been in evidence month by month in the pages of these magazines, to the delight of the cultured reader and to the greater popularity of these high-class publications.

"A Lost Epic and other Poems" was published in 1887 by Messrs. William Blackwood & Sons.

The poem which gives the volume its title is of exceeding merit. It tells the story of an aged poet who lived but

To write one book which no man yet had dared ;
One life-work, one colossal poem, fraught
With all the joy and travail of mankind,
Enriched with all the lore of all the years—
'The Epic of the Pageants of the World.'

To form some idea of the plan of this great Epic of Pageants, let us read the following outline—

What pageants these of his ! He spoke of Art ;—
And the sea-crinkled, ice cragged, palm-plumed world
Spread like a marvellous map before the eye ;
And vaguely seen in dimly shimmering light,
Lo ! Man the Artist wrought. Before his cave
Th' autochthon sketched upon a mammoth's tooth
The picture of a mammoth, chipped the flint
To shape of prehistoric man or beast.
Tribes perished, forests crumbled, sea and land
Changed places, and the stars changed colour and place
In changing skies, but Man the Artist lived—
Scratched, whittled, painted, grew in eye and hand ;

Pictured the river-bluffs, the rocky walls
 Of sea-carved creeks, the snow-capped precipice,
 The ice-borne boulder on the tropic isle,
 Till sun and moon, fish, reptile, bird and flower,
 Mammal and Man, on ivory, slate, horn, rock,
 Ringed with strange zodiacs all the savage globe !
 And nations perished, cities rose and fell,
 And Man the Artist lived and wrought and throve,
 Grew bold in thought and opulent in means,
 Survived all wreck, till Titian, Raphael came—
 For life indeed is short and art is long !

Yet the Epic was never written, save one short sweet song,
 "Blossom and Babe."

True it is that in this one song the aged bard

Touched the human stop
 In the vast organ-music of his theme.

And then

. . . The man who had thought and wrought too rapt
 To note the years, forgot that he was old !

And again

The mighty Epic that had filled his brain,
 Absorbed his very being forty years,
 He took away with him. A larger life
 May yield it larger utterance—who can tell ?

We never read this poem, but we instinctively feel "The Lost Epic" to be a strongly suggestive parable on the lives of even the best of men.

What dreams of great achievement they have had. Dreams that, were they realized, would forever mark the spot where they had lived and died. Dreams that, alas ! never got beyond that nebulous state, save perhaps in some spasmodic effort of genius, like the one song of the aged bard. Just enough to suggest the possibilities of a well-spent life, and when the last flickering breath has been drawn, what do the friends come to see but, to quote an expression used by Mr. Canton somewhere else in the volume,

The empty house of ' what might have been '
 The garden of dreams that were dreamed in vain.

"Through the Ages : a Legend of a Stone Axe" is science clothed in the attractive garb of poesy ; a region William Canton delights to invade. Here the dry, musty class-room

seems transformed before the eyes of the "sweet girl graduate," and

Monstrous birds stalk stilted by as
She perceives the slab of Trias
Scrawled with hieroglyphic claw-tracks of the mesozoic days ;

And before her she sees dawn a
Pageant of an awful fauna,
While across Silurian ages the professor's lecture blows.

The commingling of the present with the past is deftness itself.

"The Legend of the Ark," to our mind, is by far the strongest bit of writing to be found within the covers of the book. Take this part, for instance. *The great Harlot*, type or embodiment of the licentiousness of antediluvian times, came laughing

And stared with mocking eyes upon the Ark.
Around, the ancient woods were hushed and dark,
The ark was closed. No cry of beast or bird
Was heard within. No stir, no sound was heard.
Hushed were the heavens, and dark with brooding cloud.
The stillness smote her heart. She called aloud
And bade them smite the Ark.

The soldier's spear
Thundered. Then all was still.
Deep awe and fear
Fell on the Woman's soul. They smote once more
And beat upon the walls and sealed door.
But no one answered. Not a sound was heard.
The dark heavens whist. No leaf o' the forest stirred.

Then alarm, terror, anguish, rend her soul, till, with penitent voice, she cries,

'I came to mock thee, O thou man within,
But fear hath fallen upon me. Now I know
That anguish and unutterable woe
And sure destruction are at hand.'

No sound
Was heard, save bitter weeping on the ground,
Where, sobbing with her face among the dust,
The Harlot moaned : 'The Lord is just—is just !'

Then spoke a voice, gentle, compassionate :
'Why weepest thou?'

'Because it is too late.'

‘It never is too late to mourn for sin.’

‘Then open.’

‘Nay, the Lord hath shut me in.’

‘Must I then perish?’

‘Nay, thy flesh alone

Shall for thine evil in the flesh atone.’

Is it not a splendidly conceived Old Testament parallel of the malefactor on the tree. We only regret our limited space will not permit us to quote more of this dramatic poem; a poem brimful of the most expressive language, and, in the hands of a musical composer such as Dr. Mackenzie or Hamish MacCunn, would make splendid libretto for a short anthem, or rather oratorio.

“Kozma the Smith” is another strongly dramatic poem, built on a Russian fairy legend anent the Rusalkas, or female water spirits. This poem appears in the volume issued by the Glasgow Ballad Club, of which literary coterie Mr. Canton is an esteemed member.

As a novelist he has appeared repeatedly in the columns of the *Weekly Herald*. He wrote the following novels for that newspaper: “A Daughter of Eve” (3 vols.); “Marguerite,” “The Dark Lady of Lorna;” and, in collaboration with Mr. J. W. Fraser (another of our local writers), “The Luck of the Redesdales.” In English papers appeared “The Royal Galleon: or, Under which King—a tale of 1715” (2 vols.), as well as a number of short stories.

As a magazine writer he has contributed to *St. Paul's*, *Once a Week*, *All the Year Round*, *Cassell's Magazine*, *New Quarterly*, *Contemporary Review*, *Good Words*, *Scottish Review*, etc.

In 1879, Messrs. Dunn & Wright of this city published a volume of prose from his pen entitled “The Shining Waif, and other stories.”

“The Invisible Playmate,” Isbister & Co., Ltd., appeared in 1894 and is now in its third edition. “W. V. Her book and Various verses” came from the same publishers last year, and, like its predecessor received a hearty welcome from critics and readers alike.

MARY CROSS.

(MRS. JOHN LYNCH.)



TO readers of current Scottish fiction the name of Mary Cross must be familiar. Her pen has ever been a busy one, in the field of prose as well as of poetry. Though not a native of Scotland, we claim her as a Clydeside

Litterateur on account of her long residence in Glasgow. She was born in Lancashire. Her childhood, she says, remains as a dream of a lovely old garden and unlimited books, fit environment, we would say, for one who, at an early age, gave evidence of poetic power. She was allowed to read what she chose, and by her seventh year Scott and Dickens had won her admiration, charmed her interest, and the spell has remained with her till this day. Her first story was written, to use her own words, "when I had reached the mature age just mentioned," and it is scarcely necessary to say that it remains unpublished, along with the verses composed about the same time. Between Miss Cross and her brother, a strong bond of sympathy existed, and they lived in a world of their own with their books, the brother being the artist employed to illustrate the early attempts of the embryo novelist.

As we write, the subjoined lines by Miss Cross recur to our memory. They convey in a vivid word-picture the days of childhood, when the world seems a fair garden of roses; before the taint has appeared in the ripe luscious fruit and when no cloud is to be seen on the bright golden prospect that gladdens the eye in life's young dream. Alas! as we all know, how soon come the ashes of bitterness and our dream fades before the stern realities that are involved in the struggle for daily bread.

FOR AULD LANG SYNE.

I ENTER my room from the dusty street,
 The toil and the noise outside,
 The restless echoes of busy feet,
 In this city by the Clyde,
 To think of the happier days long flown,
 The radiant hours of youth,
 When faith was perfect, and doubt unknown,
 And life meant love and truth.

When we laughed at sorrow and mock'd at care,
 And only a name was woe,
 And we built such palaces in the air,
 As only the young may know.
 When we did not believe in time and change,
 In falsehood or black deceit,
 And dreamed that nothing could e'er estrange
 The hearts that were kind and sweet.

O God ! be with them, the dear old days
All that was pure and true,
I know that His hand from the past shall raise
To blossom for us anew.
What matter though heart-wounds bleed and ache,
And eyes with tears grow dim,
His mercies rise from our lives' mistakes
And there is no change in Him.

Like many of her compeers, she has to confess to the habit of "making up" stories for the delectation of her companions at school, and many of her class exercises shewed traces of attempts at versifying. Miss Cross's first home in Scotland was situated in Edinburgh, and from there she removed to Glasgow, where she was married, and has since continued to reside. Her first published verses appeared in *The Charing Cross Magazine* in 1877, when she was sixteen years of age. Since then she has contributed poetically to many magazines, winning much approval both from persons of literary reputation and ordinary readers.

Miss Cross has carried off the first prize in a Christmas competition in connection with *The People's Journal*. Her first distinct success in prose was achieved in *The People's Friend*, by the publication of "What is His History?" She has written serial stories for *Household Words*, *Victoria Magazine*, *The Reformer*, etc. The serial which appeared in the columns of this latter journal, entitled "A Dark Deceiver," is founded on a personal experience.

From Messrs. Tillotson, of Bolton, Miss Cross has received commissions to write stories, which have appeared in the pages of numerous newspapers throughout the country, as is the practice with that great firm of story-farmers; they purchasing from the writer the sole right to publish in serial form.

About five years ago our author published through Messrs. Ward & Downey, the well-known London firm, her novel "Under Sentence" which was very favourably reviewed by the press. This was followed by her novel entitled, "False Witness," from the press of Messrs. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, Edinburgh. "False Witness," has won golden opinions from the critics and has called forth congratulatory letters from eminent persons, including the late Cardinal Manning, who wrote in his own beautifully

clear caligraphy—"I assure you I have read the book so kindly sent me with much sympathy." Also from Henry Irving, now Sir Henry, who said: "I highly value your gift which I shall ever prize; I can but wish for more of your sweet sayings."

From Canada and from far-away Australia letters have been sent to her in appreciation of her works. A resident of Demerara assures her that her stories are read by the camp-fires on the lonely Rio Canje. A pleasing incident came in the way of Miss Cross's brother when he was exploring in the last-named region along with some friends. The travellers came upon an Indian mission station. How gladly did their ears welcome the sound of the church bell as it resounded through the depths of the forest, and how their hearts warmed as they beheld the little settlement! But this was not all, for Mr. Cross discovered that the Indian who gave him accommodation had named one of his children "Mary Cross," and had appropriated the surname to himself. Her reputation is still growing, and her literary work has increased very much of late years. She writes at any hour of any day, but only, as she says, "when the angel says, 'Write.'" One potent factor for success in Miss Cross's work is that she is actuated by pure love of her vocation; the monetary results becoming a secondary consideration. Dickens, Scott, and Thackeray, Shakespeare, the Brownings, Ruskin, and Byron are her literary favourites.

Mary Cross does not join in the somewhat general outcry against publishers; for, with few exceptions, her experiences have been of the pleasantest and most satisfactory kind. On one occasion the terms proposed by a certain firm were placed before a competent judge, and that friend's finding was that these were most liberal; so liberal, indeed, as to suggest financial instability on the part of the publishers. This friend was ignorant of the name of the firm in question when he gave his verdict, or small room for doubt would have been found in his mind as to their ability to implement their share in the contract.

The reader may readily note, in perusing the stories from the pen of Miss Cross, that she is a keen lover of nature; for every here and there she breaks out into the poetry of prose. Here is a little cameo, descriptive of a moonlight

harvest night; they are the opening sentences of her novelette, *The Man I Married*:—"The quiet of an autumn evening is on the world. The moon stretches her white hands in benediction over fertile plain and glistening stream and rich orchards. . . . Reaches of the river, calm and clear, and still as the sky, shine like burnished silver. . . . There is a hush so profound that one might fancy Nature has stood still to listen to some divine harmony man cannot hear."

We consider it a fair test of a writer's skill in the construction of original plot, if, while we peruse the story, we pause now and then to forecast in our own minds the forthcoming issues, and to note how often we have been astray in our prognostications, and that the final results are entirely different from the hackneyed endings that continually present themselves in the productions of mediocre writers.

In Miss Cross's novel entitled "*False Witness*," the final issue is kept a secret in the writer's hands till the last chapter, in which an entirely unlooked-for move gives a new turn to the story and serves to usher in the closing scene of a thoroughly realistic and well-written story.

"Amos Garth," the central figure of the romance has a sterling "Adam Bede" ring about him, and the character is so well portrayed, that one never for a moment doubts his innocence of the grave charges laid against him; and yet the novelist weaves around her hero such an entanglement of circumstantial evidence, that the reader sees no loophole of escape, and lies back helpless, as it were, awaiting his extrication with very considerable interest and with just a shadow of doubt pervading the mind; and yet the acquittal comes, though the trials leave their indelible scars on the soul of the good "Amos."

The following lines by Miss Cross were quoted by Mr. Mackeith in one of his appeals for subscriptions toward his "Poor Children's Fresh Air Fortnight Scheme," forming a graceful compliment to the writer of a poem which teems with eloquent appeals for help toward the amelioration of the conditions of many "Little Ones," poorly situated. 'Tis poetry like this which accentuates the true value of such compositions as compared with the society verse that carries with it but the sound of music and with little or no meaning attached to the words.

HIS LITTLE ONES.

HEAVY rain and leaden skies ;
Glasgow's dreary streets ;
Rattle of the noisy cars ;
Fainting heart that vainly tries
From depressions depths to rise ;
Blinded lark that beats
Madly 'gainst its prison bars ;
Life that leaves its battle-scars
On the faces pale and thin,
That my waking visions haunt ;
Childish faces worn and gaunt,
Childish eyes grown used to shame,
Childish lips that speak the name
Of Christ, who loved them, but to sin.

Oh, ye richer, happier heed !
He who on the cross did bleed,
Left these little ones in trust.
As from city smoke and dust,
Its faded women, haggard men,
To a sweeter scene ye speed,
To the shining shore and sea,
To the pleasant strath and glen,
Where the joyous birds are free ;
Where the roses bloom again.
And the leaves make melody.

Give pity to his little ones !
Let some human thought lead back
Even to the darker track,
Where the city children pine.
Black for them the river runs !
Over lives so sad and drear,
Made of hunger, pain, and fear,
Bid some hope and gladness shine,
Only for the Master's sake ;
How His loving heart must ache—
Over these, His little ones !

ISABELLA F. DARLING.



Isabella F. Darling

NOT many months ago, we stood in a gallery of pictures admiring a humble scene of Scottish cottar life, painted with all the charm and *technique* of an artist who, more than most of his fellows, is a genuine poet. As we stood and gazed in wrapt admiration, a gentle voice was heard at our side saying to another present—"How beautiful, and *it is just how they do it.*" The scene as we have already indicated, was a cottage; the time, the hour

of the evening meal, scanty and bare the fare, but a blessing seemed to fall upon the humble repast as we noted how the figure of the old man was portrayed in the act of giving thanks for what had been provided. His aged helpmate sat at the other side of the table, and, with bowed head, seemed to follow with heartfelt "Amen" the words of gratitude that were ascending to the Giver of All. The remark of the lady—"It is just how they do it"—kept recurring to our memory, and brought to mind the opinion expressed about "The Cottar's Saturday Night" by an old friend of the poet, who characterised that classic as a needless bit of labour, as it was simply the description of a scene very familiar to herself. Burns is said to have considered the old lady's remarks the most genuine compliment he had received. The artist or poet who describes life as he sees it, and who has ever in his story—be it portrayed on canvas or upon the printed page—that human interest which appeals directly and instantaneously to the heart of the reader or onlooker, will never lack the sympathetic utterances of friendly criticism. The fantastic creations of a new school of artists, or the extravagant productions of the writers who pander to the cry for something new, may have their thousands, but the story or canvas that brings to mind the scenes of home and long ago—that brings us almost within "touch of a vanished hand"—will make its tens of thousands to pause in the hurry and bustle of life to glance with wistful gaze, or read with choking voice the tale that is told. These thoughts are suggested by a perusal of the many fine poems that have come from the pen of Miss Isabella F. Darling. Miss Darling as a poet is never commonplace. Home, with its joys and sorrows, its sunshine and shower, ever, like the myriad-tinted rainbow, presents a varying aspect. Her poems reflect that aspect. They remind one of the sweet warbler of the woods in the early summer that, seated on the leafy bough, sings out his song of praise, while the cosy nest, with its fluffy balls of animated down and gaping bills, is ever within view, adding richness and beauty to the full-throated song—a song that floats on the evening breeze and carries comfort, aye, and it may be, a glint o' Heaven, to some pained, weary sufferer, who lies within earshot of the feathered songster's evening hymn.

Miss Darling's knowledge of Nature as portrayed in her verse, reveals a loving study of the woods and fields and flowers. Writing of the "Scottish Wild Flowers," she hies us from the dusty highways of life to

Come where the blue speedwell, thistle, and heatherbell
Bask in the sunshine, or glance in the showers ;
Buttercups sweet unfold, gowan and marigold,
Varied and beautiful, Scottish Wild Flowers.

Or take those lines from her poem, "God's Bounty"—lines luscious as the richest fruit in ripe September :

With bounteous hand He fringed the rugged hills with furze and pine
The mountain ash, the silver fir, the beech,
The fruit trees with their freighted arms flung out,
The bramble vines, weighed down 'mid grasses tall,
Peep forth with jetty eyes, stretch laden hands,
Yet leave Him half revealed.
How much He loves ! the flowers breathe and are silent,
The corn-stalks droop their golden heads abashed,
To show so little.

Or do we want four exquisite vignettes of the seasons, and we have them by culling those lines from her poem entitled "Sundered :

In the Spring when boughs are wreathing,
Perfume from the milk thorn breathing,
Tulip, crocus, snowdrop, dewy,
Blue and crimson, gold and pearly.

When the sparkling shower passes :
Daisies star the emerald grasses,
Flower bells from the meadow ringing,
Damask buds, with petals parted,
Sunny hearted !

When the spreading fruit tree flowereth,
And the fair laburnum showereth
Yellow tresses o'er the lea.

When the Autumn leaf is drooping,
And the golden sheaf is stooping,
Dark-eyed poppies, waving scarlet
Through the stubble, speeding, slowing,
Cheeks aglowing !

Where the brambles trail and clamber,
Brown leaves tinted rose and amber,
Jetty-fruited, wild, and free.

She will never come to me,
 In the snow-time, never ! never !
 When the cold flakes whirl and shiver,
 Floating, falling, drifting, fleeting.

Miss Darling strikes her lyre to a merrier strain in her lines entitled, "Love." They sing of the love that transforms the poor man's abode and makes wrath vanish like summer rain. We have heard her piece, "The Anvil Song," given by "three jolly smiths," in character, working with hammers and tongs at the anvil ; and a right merry tune they sang.

One verse will suffice to show the healthy, elevating tone of this song of the smithy :—

And while we bravely strike for gold
 With iron strength and might,
 We strike for home, like warriors bold,
 For honour, truth, and right.
 Would every blow laid falsehood low,
 And raised the truly wise ;
 Thus, 'mid the din, our thoughts within
 Like burning sparks arise.

Chorus :

Bang, bang, bang, now the anvil's sounding,
 Bang, bang, bang, while the sparks are bounding,
 Merrily, merrily all day long,
 Listen to the anvil song.

This song has been set to music as a trio by Mr. George Anderson of Glasgow, and Mr. Cumming of London has composed music to allow of it being sung as a solo.

Miss Darling, we think, has made one of her finest efforts in a poem entitled "The Greatest"—a poem which deals with a well-known incident in the life of the Lowly Nazarene. Had William Thomson, the author of "The Maister and the Bairns," been alive to-day he would have grasped the hand of Miss Darling as a loving sister of song, had he only read but this one gem from her pen. We give here the poem, and are content to leave the verdict with the reader :

THE GREATEST.

WHEN soft winds sighed through the leafy boughs,
 And birds were a' in tune,
 The Maister cam' frae the dark-green knowes
 Into the steer o' the toun.

And fisher lads left their boats in the bay
 To the billows' heave and swell,
 For the Lord had wunnerfu' thochts that day,
 And wunnerfu' things to tell.

The young were there, and the rich and puir,
 And some wi' aches an' pains,
 White heads bowed down wi' time and care,
 And bonnie, winsome weans.

Angry and loud are the words that fa'
 Sae harshly on His ear :
 'Wha'll be the greatest among us a'?'
 Quo' Peter, 'Let us speir !'

And the stalwart fishermen drew near
 Wi' meikle speed to learn ;
 They thocht the Maister didna hear,
 For He cried inower a bairn.

Wi' locks blawn free, and gled, bricht e'e
 The couthie wee thing ran ;
 Quo' the Maister, 'Let him ower to Me,
 Stan' yont here ! My wee man.'

And He patted the bairnie's chubby cheek,
 As red as the bonnie haw—
 And He said, 'I wadna gae far tae seek
 The greatest among ye a'.'

'The wisest o' the warld maun learn
 That he wha comes to Me
 Maun be as trustfu' as a bairn,
 In spirit just as wee.

'The king and the saint and the sage will meet
 At the yett o' My Faither's Ha',
 But the bairnie wi' his toddlin' feet
 Gangs in afore them a'.'

Not a few of us would gladly own the authorship of that last verse, let alone the whole poem. In execution, the work is as delicate as the finest tracery on mullioned window in a venerable cathedral pile ; and the pure doric to a student of Scottish literature, heightens the effect to a wonderful degree.

Isabella Fleming Darling is a native of the Parish of Shotts, middle ward of Lanarkshire. When she was fifteen years of age she went to reside in Carluke, and it was at that time she tried her 'prentice han' at verse making. Not long after, the family removed to Glasgow where they have since resided. To the late Mrs. Margaret Wallace, then a well-

known local poetess, is due the credit of bringing Miss Darling's verses before the public. Mrs. Wallace had been shown the manuscript of a few of the productions of the youthful worshipper of the muse, and, being struck with their merit, asked leave to send one or two of them to Mr. Stewart, editor of the *People's Friend*. Leave was granted—though not without remonstrance on the part of the young lady—and the result was very satisfactory, for in a few weeks Miss Darling saw herself in print with a poem entitled "Only a penny," and which brought to its author considerably more than the value denoted in the title.

Pious home influences had much to do in moulding the mind and character of Miss Darling during her earlier years. Her mental culture not less than her bodily health has been the never ceasing care of her mother, and the spiritual tone of much of Miss Darling's verse is but the reflection cast from the lives of the heads of the household.

Isabella F. Darling's first volume of verse, "Poems and Songs," saw the light in the year 1889, and so much did those sweetly running lines "catch on," added to the popularity of her name as a writer to many well-known magazines, that a second edition was soon called for. "Whispering Hope," published four years ago, her second collection of poems, has had even a warmer welcome from the reading public.

NICHOLAS DICKSON.



Nicholas Dickson.

'TIS but a dull inanimate picture that is not relieved by some signs of life. The cold wintry scene so emblematic of Nature's death, that is so graphically portrayed as to make us shiver involuntarily, gives signs of pulsation as the eye catches the figure of the hardy robin perched on the bare outstretched arm of some gaunt denizen of the wood, and whenever, at the raising of the magic wand of the Wizard of Abbotsford, the curtain rolls back before imagination's eye, the lonely glen is found to be tenanted with the hardy sons of the mist, clad in the kilt and the plaid, who

act over again the life histories of long ago. Sir Walter was never at any time considered essentially a religious teacher, and yet throughout his novels there are numerous scriptural references made by the characters in the course of conversation, and often valuable lessons may be learned from the study of the conduct of many of the creations evolved from his fertile brain. He wove romances around the lives of Scottish men and women who figured in an intensely religious age, when the teachings of the Sacred Book were the milk of childhood and the wine of age. The great Romancer, himself, was the son of God-fearing parents; though like George Macdonald—who, if he has not said it in words, has at least underlined in his works, as witness his “*Be douce, lads*,” austere reminder in “*Robert Falconer*”—Sir Walter considered the discipline of the Presbyterian Sabbath to be severely strict, and injudiciously so.

The religious aspect of the writings of the author of the *Waverley Novels* has been much accentuated by the publication of the “*Bible in Waverley*,” a valuable work which came from the pen of the subject of this article, Mr. Nicholas Dickson, and which was published by Messrs. A. & C. Black of Edinburgh, in 1884. Mr. Dickson takes the Sacred Word, and with it Sir Walter Scott’s works, and, in Biblio-chronological order, from Genesis to Revelation, he marks the strong vein of sympathy that is distinctly traceable through each volume, till we are astonished with the multiplicity of references bearing on the Book of books. One thing is evident by a glance at Mr. Dickson’s work, and that is his intimate knowledge of the Scriptures, which has enabled him to pick out so many sayings emanating from the various characters that figure in the romances, and place alongside them their unmistakable context in the inspired volume. David Deans, that worthy type of a God-fearing, leal-hearted Scotsman, comes in for his full share of quotation, and from the character of the man as portrayed in the charming pages of “*The Heart of Midlothian*” such is not to be wondered at. Little behind her father comes that beautiful character Jeanie, and it shows well the author’s skill and knowledge of human nature, with all its frailties and its capabilities, when he gives God all the honour,

as is evidenced in the girl's walk and conversation, for the super-human efforts put forth by her on behalf of her unfortunate sister.

Mr. Dickson in his most interesting volume brings back to our recollection many fine passages from the works of Sir Walter. Speaking of the Book of Judges, the subject of this article remarks that many of the narratives to be found in that portion of Scripture seem to have arrested the attention of the novelist and may have suggested some of the incidents which are detailed in his novels.

"The novel of *Old Mortality*, in particular," our author remarks "contains many of these apparently suggested incidents."

After the battle of Drumclog, Lord Evandale was made prisoner by the Covenanters, but at the intercession of Henry Morton, he was allowed to escape. Riding away for dear life, he sought refuge in the cottage of Bessie Maclure, a poor, blind widow. Long after the incident took place Henry Morton called at the cottage, and to him she told the story in the following words:—

'Ae nicht, sax weeks or thereby, afore Bothwell Brig, a young gentleman stopped at this puir cottage, stiff and bleeding with wounds, pale and dune oot wi' riding, and his horse sae weary he couldna drag ae foot afore the other, and his foes were close ahint him, and he was ane o' our enemies. What could I do, sir?—You that's a sodger will think me but a silly auld wife; but I fed him, and relieved him, and keepit him hidden till the pursuit was over.'

'And who,' said Morton, 'dare disapprove of your having done so.'

'I kenna,' answered the blind woman. 'I gat ill-will about it among some o' our ain folk. They said I should hae been to him what Jael was to Sisera. But well I wot, I had nae divine command to shed blood, and to save it was baith like a woman and a Christian.'"

Truly, as Mr. Dickson remarks, "What is this but the story of Jael and Sisera told and acted in the light, and under the beneficent influence of the teaching of the New Testament."

These are but gleanings here and there from Mr. Dickson's volume, a work that must commend itself, not only to every

Border man but to every Scotsman. The author of this book has done something more than simply give us a key to Scriptural references in the Waverley novels. He has emphasised, in the most pronounced terms, the fact that Sir Walter gave evidence in almost every page of his work that the Bible was to him "The Book of books," and his ample handling of Sacred History bears witness against many writers of the present day whose like references are so slight and indefinite in character as always to seem apologetic in their strain, and only inserted to suit the tastes of folks who go in for *that sort of thing*.

Like the great novelist whom he so much admires, and to whose cairn he has added such a conspicuous stone as "The Bible in Waverley," Mr. Nicholas Dickson is a Border man, having been born just sixty-six years ago at Gattonside, near Melrose. His young days were spent, therefore, in the very heart of Scotland, where every stream, every view that is obtained from the neighbouring hills, recalls scenes in the life of that great man, or suggest passages that occur in his world-famed writings.

Mr. Dickson received his schooling in the famous parish school of Melrose. Choosing the profession of a school-teacher, he gained his first experiences at Lilliesleaf in Roxburghshire. He then removed to the North of England where he was engaged in a school at Houghton-le-Spring, Durham, from which place he made his early essays in the thorny paths of literature which took the form of a weekly letter to the *Sunderland News*.

Returning to Scotland he passed the government examination in Moray House, Edinburgh, and immediately thereafter received an appointment as Headmaster of the school connected with the East Gorbals Free Church, Glasgow, then under the ministrations of the late Rev. Alexander Cumming. Of Mr. Dickson's abilities as a teacher we have evidence in the fact, that soon after his appointment, extra accommodation had to be acquired, when the hall of the old Wheat-Sheaf Inn was hired; the old hostelry stood at the corner of Clyde Place and Buchan Street, on the sight of the present Gorbals School under the Glasgow School Board. He afterwards became Headmaster of what was then known as the East Gorbals Territorial School, and

while under his care it became one of the largest in the city connected with the Free Church.

Failing health, by and by compelled Mr. Dickson to relinquish teaching altogether and he accepted an offer to enter the counting-house of Messrs. Blackie & Son, publishers, with which firm he was connected for a number of years. He is still employed in the bookselling and publishing trade in this city.

Literature has ever been the bent of Mr. Dickson's mind in his leisure hours. He has long been a constant contributor to the periodicals.

Mr. Dickson's published works are "The Bible in Waverley," already referred to, and before passing from that valuable work, it may be interesting to note here, that the idea of that book was suggested to its author by his seeing, while yet a lad at school, these lines from Sir Walter's "Monastery" written on the fly-leaf of an elder brother's Bible—

Within that awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries !
Happiest they of human race,
To whom God has given grace.
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch and force the way ;
And better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

and which produced an impression never to be forgotten, making him always think of Sir Walter Scott as a religious writer, and to this incident may be traced the desire on Mr. Dickson's part to point out how reverently the great novelist wrote of the Bible, and how much he drew from it.

The same publishers, Messrs. Adam and Charles Black, issued in 1888 Mr. Dickson's "Lady Queensfield ; a Border Holiday."

'Tis common now a-days to find little or no guidance to the character and contents of a book from its title, but in this case the sub-title, at least, is thoroughly expressive of the matter contained within the covers.

"Lady Queensfield" is a very pleasantly written historical romance. The beautiful Border country with its memorable associations of foray and feud, and its exquisite ballads of romance and war, are pleasantly told, while the enjoyable

accessories of a thoroughly human and probable story of country life, carry us along with absorbing interest from start to finish.

Mr. Dickson in 1890 and 1891 published through Messrs. Morison Brothers, of this city, these clever and amusing little brochures, "The Elder at the plate," "The Kirk Beadle," "The Precentor," etc., a collection of anecdotes and incidents which have earned for themselves the popularity they deserve. He is also editor of *The Border Magazine*, an attractively conducted illustrated monthly, that is adding steadily to its popularity.

WILLIAM FINDLAY, M.D.

(GEORGE UMBER.)



William Findlay

THE reader of "In my City Garden"—the first work of importance by Dr. William Findlay, better known through his pen name of "George UMBER"—cannot fail to be struck by the precision and accuracy with which the author catches and fixes on the printed page, as on canvas, the lights and shadows of the human mind.

Follow him into his city garden and, under the spell of the pale moonlight, we are transported with him to Shakespearian scenes. And Romeo and Juliet, Lorenzo and Jessica, appear at imagination's call. Then all at once the scene is changed as the notes of a cornet sound in our ear, coming to us above the stir and din of the street below, and the flower of Scottish Song is wafted in the air. Our author immediately begins to moralise on the value of the services thus rendered by this minister, this itinerant musician, as he stands in the public thoroughfare appealing to all within earshot. Now, with his melting strains that touch the heart in sorrow pent or, anon, stirring his listeners with the patriotic melodies we love so well.

Then the author's "mind is away on wing" again as he looks to the North West of his garden and sees, bathed in the soft light of the queen of night, that sacred spot in "God's Acre" where lies all that is mortal of his "Wee Peg," a gentle little spirit that flits through the pages of the book, never as a sad and sorrowful presence, but with tread light as angel's feet, coming as a reminder of happy, happy days now past and gone.

"Cassa Wappy" those beautiful lines written by Dr. Moir of Musselburgh, in memory of a favourite child he had lost, are considered about the finest In Memoriam verses ever penned, and, like the author of "Mansie Waugh," Dr. Findlay's greatest inspiration to literary work occurred at the loss of his little girl. Indeed, Dr. Findlay says in his dedication that the sketches in the volume were written "partly as a discipline and solace to my own and her mother's bereaved heart, and partly as a means of fixing her living image more lastingly in our memories." No subject appeals for more delicate handling than references to one who has departed this life, and to whom the reader is only introduced by the author, but so deft and artistic are the references to his loss, by the Doctor, that the reader looks forward with pleasureable anticipation to the next visit of that little angel form. Perhaps we had better let our readers judge for themselves.

"Though it is but a step, so to speak, between the Necropolis and where I sit in my city garden, smoking, and musing, and looking idly from me, my little girl never visits

me dressed in her weeds of dusky death. There is not the remotest suggestion of mortality about her as she comes tripping round the house-end, and like a perfect vision of delight runs across the grass and down the gravel walk to where I am sitting. She wears the lilac-spotted frock and white linen pinafore that she used to look so bonnie in. . . . Her rich, auburn, frizzy hair, which the level sunlight is kissing. . . . Those great speaking eyes of hers, which reflected every little ripple of mirth or cloud of grief" etc., and this is always the happily reminiscent manner of the little angel's visits to her "old dad."

Dr. Findlay has a great love for his city garden, bounded by its red brick wall on the north, west, and south; the house being toward the east: its apple-tree blossom but no fruit: its Virginia creepers climbing the brick wall of the back-jamb and losing itself among the dove-cots: its elder bushes and laburnum: its balsam-poplars, and rowans: its venerable currant bushes: and its bright piece of daisied turf, the child of much thought and care, but which is now the most refreshing spot whereon rests the eye of this "Scottish Charles Lamb" as our author has not inaptly been termed by a mutual literary friend.

Not much of a garden to crow about, you will say, reader. Well, nothing if we compare it with the culture, and colour, and variety, in the gardens and conservatories of the "wealthy and great," but remember, we sit in the Doctor's city garden within a mile of the cross of this Western Metropolis of ours. And, to follow the author's thought, it is like the little flower box, with its two or three dusty-greenish plants, at the garret window in our city slums. It brings to the lonely occupant "the spirit of green fields and country roads." Perhaps it was the last thing that gave a little comfort and quiet in the parting days of his child, ere the angels came. "My City Garden," then, has become very dear to its possessor, and in its summer-seat he sits and smokes and dreams, and from such seemingly idle occupation has come the fruit of much fine writing that has given us great pleasure indeed.

In these sketches there are some fine pawky touches of humour. Speaking of Church-going he says "It may be because I am not very kirk-greedy myself, but I hardly envy those folks who can stand three sermons a day. If the

sermons are of the right sort, self-searching in their quality, holding the mirror up to the flaws and crookednesses of their own human conduct, then, to be able to sit through so many of them without ever as much as turning a hair, surely bespeaks a callousness on their part, or else a happy faculty of seeing their point directed towards their neighbours rather than themselves."

"Uncle Venner's Reminiscence," which forms one of the chapters of the book is a splendid bit of writing. Truly a Scottish Idyll of rare beauty, but it must be read through to be appreciated as it should be.

There is a fine homeliness about this volume of Dr. Findlay's.

Reading, for instance, that chapter "A Children's Tea Party." We feel as if, in very truth, we were at the foot of the garden, guests with "Uncle Venner" and Daisy, and joining in the fun with Jean, and Jessie, and Peden, and Kye the Baby.

The chatter of the children seems to come from the garden in reality, and has no stiffness about it as if written for others. Their conduct and conversation is as unrestrained as if no one but themselves were there to see and hear, and we rise from a perusal of the pages feeling that we had forgotten, for a time, the busy world with its cares and worries, and feel refreshed for the all too short respite.

"The Kitchen Meeting" introduces one of the most pathetic stories we have read, and with all its pathos it is not over-done, not a slight tribute to its author, for it is just a sketch where a less artistic pen would have erred. If all our writers on the lights and shadows, the bright days and the dowie, of Scottish rural life were possessed of the fine touch of "George Umber" there would be little room for the cheap sneering at what some term the literature of the kailyard.

"In My City Garden" came from the press of Mr. Alexander Gardner, Paisley and London, in 1895. This volume was followed a year later, from the same publisher, by "Ayrshire Idylls of other days." Both volumes are handsomely got up; the illustrations by Mr. William Findlay, Junior, son of the author, being a splendid compliment to the books, and the author will agree that these drawings tend much to the value of the productions. The second article

in this latest volume is entitled "My First Funeral," and if the real down-at-the-bottom feelings of a boy were ever given voice to, it is in this chapter of the book. While the minister opens the ceremony with prayer the boy had been thinking and admiring his new suit bought for the occasion, when "The sight, through the half-open door, of the two little black coffins, with their shining white mountings, sitting on the table, gives a sudden check to my vanity. As I think of the two cold little bodies of my twin brother and sister lying in them I feel rebuked in my wicked heart for being so proud of my new clothes, which but for their untimely deaths I would not have possessed. To put things right, and keep myself from feeling that I am a monster, I try to say that I believe I would most willingly part with them for their young lives back again, but, even as I do so, I am distinctly sensible—for the loyalty of my faith's sake at least—that it is well that it belongs to the category of those things which are beyond trial."

Some works don't lend themselves to quotation, but here, there are so many fine conceits, so many concrete bits of philosophy that one is tempted to quote at every turn. The Doctor, as a quotation from a chapter on "The Working Man's Sunday Morning" will show, is in keen sympathy with Nature's every mood. "The ripening corn just stirred to morning prayer by the wind's soft rustle; the meek kine, couched upon the grass, chewing their cud, and lazily contemplating the tall shadows of the hedges and trees projected on the ground before them, or listening enwrap to the voice of the lark, a mere speck scaling the blue "lift" and pouring out its full heart on heaven's very door step; the distant clumps of wooding, and strips of brown 'plantin', mere blurs of solemn feeling against the vague horizon." That is a bit of splendid writing.

A fine mental photograph of boyhood's thoughts and feelings is given by our author when he recalls "The Old Pew" with its memories of "dreich" sermons and his wistful looks at the lazy clock in front of the "laft," "the provokingly slow fingers on the dial-plate of which we wearying youngsters used to watch, and wish they would only go a little faster, as if they and the sermon had some secret understanding with each other."

In speaking of "A Literary Relation" he pays handsome tribute to one of his forbears, whose name will live for many a day had he written naught else but that grand old Scotch Song "Be kind to Auld Granny."

The description of the box coming from the old home in "Auld Killie" to his lodgings when at College in Glasgow, contains a loving and touching tribute to the memory of a mother whose name can always command his pen's best work, as can be realized by a perusal of the closing article in "Ayrshire Idylls," entitled, "My Mother's Picture."

That Dr. Findlay's sympathies are much akin to the feelings of Ruskin on the subject of railways, need scarcely be questioned if we read the following from his chapter "The Old and the New Carrier."

"I never listen to a panegyric on the blessings of steam, and railways, and postal telegraphs, and all the rest of it, which have so greased the wheels of civilisation that everything is going at breakneck speed, without being old-fashioned enough to utter a demurrer, not loud, perhaps—I would be thought a lunatic if I did—but deep rather, like the curses of Macbeth's 'mouth friends.'

"Brought to the test, however, my reason is willing to own that these modern discoveries and inventions, like Fortunatus' wishing-hat, have as good as annihilated time and space. But if they have brought distant places near, and multiplied my opportunities for travelling and sight-seeing, they have at the same time increased my responsibilities, and worry, and cares, which I cannot esteem an unmixed blessing in this already too-chased mundane existence of ours. Besides, if the railway does take you quicker over the ground, the memory it leaves behind resembles a nightmare, a delirium, a feverish dream, the passage of a weaver's shuttle, 'a tale told by an idiot.' But a journey performed in the slow carrier's cart, with its pleasant country sights, its stoppages by the way, its exchange of gossip and sly bantering talk at wayside inns, and farms, and cottages, is an experience that to its minutest detail, imprints itself deeply on the youthful mind, and, like newly bottled wine, always improves with age."

Dr. William Findlay is a native of Kilmarnock, where he was born in January, 1846. Here he received a somewhat scant education,—at least, compared with these days of

enlightened School Boards,—first at the school of the late Mr. Osborne, and afterwards at the Academy. On leaving school, while still only eleven years of age, to try his hand as a bread winner, he had a varied and picturesque experience of life and manners, first as a message-boy to a shoemaker, next as an auctioneer and sheriff-officer's clerk, and then as book-keeper in a coach-building establishment. While acting in this capacity he was seized with a great desire to learn one of the branches of the business, which his masters readily gratified, making it a condition of his apprenticeship that he should still continue in his spare moments to discharge the duties of book-keeper and correspondent to the firm. A few years of this dual occupation brought him well into his teens, when he formed a resolve to go to College with a view to entering one of the learned professions. Intercourse with books, and contact with the late Rev. James Banks, a gentleman of singular enthusiasm and unselfishness, who started a night school in the Holm Mission to teach young men and women Hebrew, and Greek, and English grammar and composition, on a novel method, which he himself called the *drop system*, were, doubtless, the chief factors in the formation of this resolve. Mr. Banks's system, however, was too slow for our ardent young College aspirant. Moreover, that gentleman's health, always delicate, failing, and his philanthropic enterprise coming to an abortive close, the subject of the present article left his native town for Glasgow, the better to work for the wherewithal to go to College and to pursue his studies at night schools. And so well did his plans thrive that in his twentieth year he entered, as a medical student, our historic old University, in the High Street of Glasgow, and graduated in 1870, the year that ancient seat of learning gave place to the magnificent pile of buildings situated on the banks of the Kelvin. His first experience as a practitioner of medicine, after graduating, was at Ratho, near Edinburgh, where he was *locum tenens* for a few months. He thereafter came to Glasgow (Dennistoun) and established what has proved to be a large and growing practice. The Doctor is not a man who is often, if ever, seen on the public platform. His views on the questions of the hour that may call for his interest, find vent in letters or articles under the nom de plume of "George UMBER,"

articles which show that the writer knows his subject right down to the bottom. His matter is therefore thorough and his style is of that quiet, thoughtful, yet forcible manner that carries conviction with it.

To *know* Dr. Findlay, we must meet him in his home. There the geniality, the *bonhomie*, of the man is at once apparent, and the wide reading and the culture is gradually discovered, for ostentation or parade find no place there. The refinement and sweet homely air of comfort and ease is soon largely attributed to the hostess, if the guest has eyes to see and ears to hear, and the wonder is that the loving and delicate references, throughout the Doctor's books, to his gentle and worthy helpmate are so few.

ROBERT FORD.



Robert Ford

IN the preface to a People's Edition of his entertaining and valued classic, "Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character," Dean Ramsay wrote these words, "There are persons who do not sympathise with my great desire to preserve and to disseminate these specimens of Scottish humour ; indeed I have reason to suspect that some have been disposed to consider the time and attention which I have given to the subject as ill-bestowed, or at anyrate as

somewhat unsuitable to one of my advanced age and sacred profession. . . . If mankind be too ready to enter upon pleasures which are dangerous or questionable, it is the part of wisdom and of prudence to supply them with sources of interest, the enjoyment of which are innocent and permissible."

Were the cultured and witty Divine to revisit these scenes we venture to say that he would entertain a still higher opinion of the value of his own labours, and that his strong desire would be intensified for the dissemination of books, in which are preserved the true and sterling characteristics of the Scottish people, for if the future student of our national characteristics and humour, simply directs his inquiries by a perusal of the daily reports of the press chronicler, and finds that the youth of our cities were content to swarm for amusement to music halls, and listen to the repetition of doggerel that neither commends itself by the sense of the words, the music of its jingle, nor by the intelligibility of its title, then woe betide his opinion of us as a nation.

All the more honour then, we say, to the men who have preserved for all time the creditable and admirable traits of national characteristics, to the genial Dean for his inestimable book; to the talented trio, Carrick, Motherwell, and Henderson, who gave us the bright and entertaining volume that comes dressed in the garb of "The Laird of Logan;" to Dr. Charles Rogers for his "Century of Scottish Life;" to the Reverend Paxton Hood for his "Scottish Characteristics"; to Wilson, Hogg, and to many others, and not less to one whom we delight to honour for his rich and finely classified volume of Scottish humour, character, folk-lore, story and anecdote, entitled, "Thistledown," which is from the pen of Mr. Robert Ford.

No true friend of the author of "Thistledown" has ever attempted to make the writer lay the flattering unction to his soul that his volume eclipses the "Reminiscences" of the witty and facetious divine, and, indeed, we know that no one would be more ready to resent that claim than Mr. Ford himself.

Dean Ramsay's volume has been recognised by all writers on the subject as the "Class-book," and every author since

his day has had to own his indebtedness to the collection of the Edinburgh cleric for many of his most characteristic anecdotes, and, indeed, any attempt at an enumeration of the writings on the subject naturally dates from the publication of the "Reminiscences."

This much we will claim for Mr. Ford's "Thistledown." In its classification of Scottish humour and characteristics it is decidedly in advance of any existing work.

Mr. Ford is himself a thorough humourist. Witty repartee, sparkling anecdotes, and amusing stories, flow from him as ore from a newly-tapped vein. No one knows better the real character of Scottish humour, nor values it more highly, and, at a glance, he can gauge the value of any contribution on the subject that may come to the surface.

"Thistledown" is divided into eighteen chapters, beginning appropriately with "The Scottish tongue; its graphic force and powers of pathos and humour," and ending where humour is least expected, in the kirkyard. Each division of the book is prefaced by suggestive and explanatory remarks which serve to bring the reader into hearty sympathy with the particular phase or cast of Scotch humour under consideration, or rather demonstrated. The various anecdotes, again, are dovetailed with remarks so pat in their nature as to reveal the author's thorough knowledge of the subject. And now, before saying anything about Mr. Ford's life, let us preface such with a remark.

The youth who, from his infancy, has breathed the vitiated atmosphere of city life is wont to envy the lad whose home is within sound of the lark's song as it carols its hymn of praise in the bosom of a cloudless sky, and, if the city youth have a soul of even the slightest poetic sympathies, he will yearn for an echo of that thrill which quivers through the veins, as the wild, terrific storm sweeps hill and dale of a dark winter night.

Such associations, wedded, as they oftentimes are with the labour of the farm, and the shepherd's pastoral life, foster in the soul of the country-bred lad that love of Nature which finds voice in the tributes of poesy.

The mind nurtured amid the surroundings of the worry and turmoil of the cities' deafening din is not always, on

the other hand, utterly devoid of that feeling for Nature which brings God's own sunshine into a man's life. To those who think so a voice comes from the past,—a voice that used to be accompanied with the hammering on the lapstone—

They say I'm poor and scant of wealth,
 My sunny moments few ;
 They deem my comforts small—my friends
 False, fickle, and untrue !
 They reckon that because I toil
 All day where hammers clink,
 My soul's a midnight without stars—
 They dream—but I—I think !
 They little know with head bowed down
 My mind's away on wing ;
 And 'though 'mong humble men I work,
 I'm happier than a king.

Mr. Robert Ford has now spent thirty years of his life 'mid city surroundings, but his love for the gowany braes, the rippling burn, the auld-world clachan where he was born and spent his early years, is as strong as ever, needing only a reference to one of the scenes and incidents of his youth, and his "mind is away on wing" chasing the startled hare, or gudlin' for trout in the burn.

Robert Ford was born in the village of Wolfhill, parish of Cargill, Perthshire, on the 18th day of July, 1846.

His early days were spent, during the winter months, in attending the parish school, and in the summer he was employed as a herd laddie.

Like many others who have risen above the common level, he attributes much of that success to the training and up-bringing of his good mother. To use his own words to us, "Here let me say what I have said often and never tire repeating. A naturally intelligent mother, ever so saintly, loving, and kind, that I thank God I was privileged to be her son, was the first to direct my attention to books, and particularly poetic literature. I used to sit and read to her by the fireside in the winter forenichts while she busied her fingers with seam or stocking," making, we may venture to add, "auld claes look amaist as weel's the new."

Mr. Ford never speaks of his mother, but he holds up his head,—though his eye may glisten and a tear sound in

his voice. She was a noble woman and he is proud, as he has said, to be called a son of hers.

Mr. Ford's father, in early life a pit-sawyer, was owner of the little cottage in which most of the family—five sons and a daughter—were born and brought up. He held a little bit of land on the Stobhall estate sufficient to keep a horse and a couple of cows. He was a man of strong parts and of marked individuality, a man whose mind was above the petty ruling of use and wont, and who, in the exercise of strong, robust commonsense, did things often in his own original way.

Robert continued to reside under the parental roof till he was seventeen years of age, when one day he set out on the broad, turbulent stream of life, and landed in the busy town of Dundee, where he found employment in one of the weaving factories. When in Dundee Mr. Ford contributed both in prose and verse to the local journals. In 1874 he removed to Glasgow, where he has been since employed as a clerk in one of our large warehouses.

Mr. Ford holds a far too modest estimate of himself as a poet. In his own humorous way he says: "I have never got properly inside the temple of the gods, but have just been indulgently allowed to wipe the noses of the graven images that decorate the lobby."

In 1878 he published a volume of verse entitled, "Hame-spun Lays and Lyrics." His "Humorous Scotch Readings in Prose and Verse" and his "Glints o' Glentoddy," appeared in 1881 and 1887, and have gone through a number of editions. "Rare Old Scotch Ballads," edited by Mr. Ford, came out in 1888, and an enlarged edition, "Auld Scots Ballants," the following year. He is also editor of "The Harp of Perthshire," "Ballads of Bairnhood," and, just lately, a re-issue of Alexander Rodger's poems which Mr. Ford prefixed with a very appreciative biography. His latest work is a volume entitled, "American Humorists," from the press of Mr. Alexander Gardner, Paisley. In this handsome book about a score of writers are dealt with in an able and appreciative manner that gives evidence of thorough sympathy and judgment. The extracts are in every instance fine examples of their author, and very suitable for public or private recitation. An excellent

portrait heads each article. The volume opens with Artemus Ward and closes with a sketch of Eugene Field.

Besides being a writer of prose and verse, Mr. Ford possesses the by no means common ability of being able to read his pieces before an audience in a pawky, humorous style that is irresistible. His reading, "Patie Pirnie's Woin'" is, in our opinion, one of the best of our humorous Scottish stories, and the author brings out all its pawkiness and subtlety when he takes to the platform.

Apart altogether from its being his first book, the collection entitled "Hamespun Lays" has a melancholy charm for its author. Mr. Ford's mother, as we have already stated, was the first to turn his mind to books. For a long time previous to 1878 she had been in poor health, and Robert knew that the appearance of his verses in a collected form would be peculiarly acceptable to her; but she did not live to see the consummation, for the very morning of Mrs. Ford's funeral the proofs of the last forme arrived from the printer for correction.

A few weeks after her death Mr. Ford was taking a walk in the outskirts of Glasgow, when a street singer, as he approached, struck the opening notes of a song his mother used to "croon ower." To use his own words: "It went to my heart like a gunshot. I dropped the girl more than the customary penny, and asked her to 'Sing that sang again, Lassie;'" and the same evening he wrote these beautiful lines; we may be sure, with a full heart.

OH ! SING THAT SANG AGAIN, LASSIE.

OH ! sing that sang again, lassie,
 'Twas a' my mither's store ;
 Her seam upon her denty knee,
 She sweetly crooned it o'er.
 An' aft ayont the winter fire,
 Nane else to hear or see,
 She's rowed me fondly in her lap,
 An' sung the sang to me.

Oh ! sing that sang again, lassie,
 Sing a' that sang again,
 Its ilka note is bliss the best,
 Sweet, sweet's the auld refrain.

It glints a gladness roun' my heart,
 It wraps my soul in glee ;
 Then sing again the dear auld sang
 My mithei sang to me.

We cannot part with our subject, till we have quoted the last verse of his exquisite poem, "Love," taken from his latest book of verse, "Tayside Songs," published by Mr. Gardner, in 1895. The poem was written in answer to the query, "What is Love?"

LOVE broucht heaven down to earth,
 Love got man forgiven,
 Love alane, or a' be dune,
 Will lift the earth to Heaven.
 Tell ye what is love, lassie ?
 Comes it frae above ?
 Love is guidness—guid is God—
 Lassie—God is Love.

A favourite expression of Mr. Ford's father, "Keep aye the Croon o' the Causey," is made the theme of one of his poems, a poem which is full of sage advice, as befits the lips of an aged father speaking to his sons. We give a few verses as a closing quotation.

THE CROON O' THE CAUSEY.

'Twas a word o' my faither's, dear auld man,
 An' I loe it the mair for his sake ;
 When ony o's a' frae the hoose were gaun
 A headway in the world to make.
 Wi' oor hands in his, fu' fondly clasp'd
 'Twas ever his pairtin' sang—
 "Keep aye by the Croon o' the Causey, lads,
 Whaurever you chance to gang."

Is your lot in the busier haunts o' men,
 Whaur quick-witted energy rules,
 Or cast in the howe o' the muirlan' glen,
 Mony miles frae the kirks and schules ?
 That your hearts be hale till the day you dee,
 An' your consciences free o' a pang—
 "Keep aye by the Croon o' the Causey, lads
 Whaurever you chance to gang."

The highgates o' Honesty, Honour, and Truth
 Will often feel rough and look drear ;
 While mony that waddle in sidelin' paths
 Will sup o' the wale o' guid cheer,

Still heise up your hearts wi' the higher hope,
An rough the road or how lang—
“Keep aye by the Croon o' the Causey, lads,
Whaurever you chance to gang.”

Oh, it's no by his grip o' the world's gear
That a man is aye rich or puir ;
There's a wealth o' mind an soul that's mair
Than the price o' the Koh-i-noor.
An' it's mair to merit than gain success.
Sae while you can totter along—
“Keep aye by the Croon o' the Causey, lads,
Whaurever they chance to gang.”

JOHN W. FRASER.



John W. Fraser

OUR old Scottish ballads have been a source of attraction to many a genuine poet. The melodies of these rude strains of a by-gone age keep ringing in his ear, till he is forced to retire to a quiet secluded spot in the wood, where his fingers keep wandering softly o'er the strings of

the harp, till a semblance of the music begins to float in the air, and his eye lightens up—

With all the poet's ecstasy !

and—

In varying cadence soft or strong,
He sweeps the sounding chords along.

The sources of their inspiration were many and varied. Their tender feelings were touched by the sad fate of fair Annie of Loch Ryan, who cried in her bitterest of woe, as she thought of her false knight—

May never a woman that has borne a son,
Ha'e a heart sae fou o' wae.

Or the depth of pity was reached as they read the closing lines in "The Lament of the Border Widow"—

Nae living man I'll love again,
Since that my lovely knight is slain ;
Wi' ae lock of his yellow hair
I'll chain my heart for ever mair.

Their devotion to the call of duty was aroused at the ready response of Sir Patrick Spens, even though he knew well that danger, nay even death, was involved in the seaward voyage.

On the other hand, feelings of sturdy independence surged through their veins as they recalled the brave conduct of the doughty outlaw Murray, or, with gentler flow, the softer feelings of the heart swayed in sympathy with Hamilton of Bangour as he sang "Busk ye, busk ye, my bonnie Bride." Their imaginations came into play as they vainly endeavoured to fancy the scenes that were pictured in the mental vision of the Ettrick Shepherd, as he wrote of Bonnie Kilmeny—

She 'wakened on a couch of the silk sae slim,
All striped wi' the bars of the rainbow's rim ;
And lovely beings round were rife,
Who erst had travelled mortal life ;
And aye they smiled, and 'gan to speer,
'What spirit has brought this mortal here?'

Not content with imitating the "makkirs" of our country's songs, some of our minstrels attempted to foist these self-invented melodies on the public, as the veritable remains of a ruder age ; adopting this questionable course, possibly,

with a view to ascertaining whether the offspring of their genius would bear comparison with the children of the remoter period.

Allan Cunningham and his talented wife, Jean Walker, "The lovely lass of Preston Mill," played woeful tricks of imposition in this way, on Mr. Cromek, the editor of "Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song;" many of the songs and ballads communicated to the credulous London litterateur as ancient, being speedily discovered by the critical experts, as simply compositions of the young stone-mason of Dalswinton.

There was decided genius in these imitations of Allan's, however, and like a clever copy of an old masterpiece on canvas, it was only a connoisseur, who could detect the fraudulency. In fact, the beauty of some of these ballads and songs by Cunningham have long ago led men to forgive him heartily, while they pity the unfortunate Cromek.

We have genuine poets, however, who are content to imitate these ancient ballad-mongers for the very pleasure of hearing the rhythmic swing of the old music ringing in their ear.

For Mr. John W. Fraser, it has been claimed, that there are perhaps few living who have affected the old ballad style with better results. We may be pardoned, if at this point—before speaking of our subject biographically—in furtherance of our remarks, and as a contribution towards the substantiation of our claim, we quote one of Mr. Fraser's ballads.

A BALLAD OF BUCHAN.

"GUDE speed the plough," the maiden cried,—

The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea ;

"Speed weel the wark," the man replied,

And the sun glints bright on Bennachie.

The owsen pause on the furrow so red,—

The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea ;

The lark sings loud in the blue o'erhead,

And the sun glints bright on Bennachie.

She has brought him bread right sweet and brown,—

The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea ;

And clear bright ale to wash it down,

And the sun glints bright on Bennachie.

He was young, and tall, and strong,—

The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea ;

She sweet as e'er was praised in song,
And the sun glints bright on Bennachie.

He looked on her face so bonnie and faire,—
The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea ;
He looked on her wealth of yellow haire,
And the sun glints bright on Bennachie.

He looked on her eyes so kind and blue,—
The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea ;
He clasped her hands, so strong and true,
And the sun glints bright on Bennachie.

" Oh gie me thy plight and troth sweet May,"—
The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea—
" And wedded we'll be on St. Fastern's Day,"
And the sun glints bright on Bennachie.

He has taen her his twa strong arms within,—
The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea ;
I wot the maiden made little din,
And the sun glints bright on Bennachie.

He has taen her his twa strong arms within,—
The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea ;
And kisses laid on her cheek and chin,
And the sun glints bright on Bennachie.

" Oh I will cherish my ain sweet May,
While Ugie sings as it rins to the sea ;
Till the sun gangs down on the warld's last day,
And nae mair glints bright on Bennachie."

" And tide what may, or gude or bad,—
The Ugie sings as it rins to the sea,—
I'll aye be true to my ploughman lad,
Till there's nae sun to glint on Bennachie."

Note in the closing verses the strong, suggestive figures, which are made to serve as illustrations of their constancy—

" Oh I will cherish my ain sweet May
Till the sun gangs down on the warld's last day."

With the repetition all through the ballad, the song of the Ugie is ever in our ear, and we are shading our eyes from the sunshine that glints on fair Bennachie after we have finished the poem.

Mr. Fraser is a native of Crieff, says Mr. Robert Ford, in his "Poet's Album." He was educated partly there, but finished his scholastic career in Edinburgh, when he determined to adopt the profession of school teaching.

His first situation of importance he obtained in 1863, when he was appointed chief assistant at the Iron Works School at Motherwell. At that time, he lived at Windmill-hill, where he made one of those life-friendships that only death can sever. The late David Wingate and Mr. Fraser were close neighbours for several years during this period, and the intimacy then formed, became a union of hearts and sympathies that only ceased a few years ago, when in the old graveyard at Tollcross, the younger man stood by the open grave of his old friend and brother-bard—Scotland's Collier Poet.

While in Motherwell Mr. Fraser's tastes took a decidedly literary turn, and contributions to *Chambers' Journal* and other high-class magazines gave evidence of the work of his cultured pen.

Mr. Fraser left Motherwell on receiving an appointment as headmaster of a school at Wishaw. From there he went to Carfin, to take charge of the Iron Works School. Following that came his most important engagement as a teacher, when he removed to Glasgow to take up the responsible position of headmaster of the Baird School, Garngad Hill. In the year 1879 Mr. Fraser was offered, and accepted the secretaryship of the Baird Trust, the delicate and onerous duties of which position he has since performed with the fullest satisfaction to the trustees, and greatly to his own credit.

Mr. Fraser was not long in Glasgow till he became actively associated with the literary life of the city. His contributions to the *Glasgow Herald* always received an appreciative welcome. For the *Weekly Herald* he wrote, in collaboration with Mr. Wm. Canton, the "Luck of the Reddesdales," a serial story of uncommon interest which displayed the literary tastes and abilities of its co-authors.

When the Glasgow Ballad Club was formed in 1876, Mr. Fraser's name was found among the list of its promoters, and ever since, his interest has been maintained and his contributions appreciated.

It has been argued that no benefit is to be found in imitating the old ballads, and away back in the fifties, Alexander Smith, in an essay on Scottish Ballads, made some very strong statements against the simulation of

ancient lays. "No modern attempt," he says "could by any chance or possibility be mistaken for an original. . . . However dexterous the workman, he is discovered—a word blabs, the turn of a phrase betrays him."

We maintain, nevertheless, that there is good to be attained in imitating the old ballad literature of our country, provided the modern poet in his work is actuated by a desire to assimilate that simplicity of expression, and that power of drawing from Nature, figures of illustration which from their vividness and force carry the meaning of the writer to the mind of his reader like a bolt from the blue. And in order to attain those dual powers of simplicity and vigour, what could lend better inspiration than to recall scenes and incidents of history similar to those which inspired the minstrels of old. What sends the student of art to the Galleries of the Louvre, or to the Churches and Cathedrals of Italy, but that he may sit day after day, in front of one of these old masterpieces by Titian, or Angelo, or Raphael, and thus be enabled, however feebly and inaccurately at first, to catch the tones and *technique* of those masters in the world of art.

In Mr. Fraser's ballad, "Douglas," which we now quote, he recalls a well-known incident of Scottish History. In the simplest of language he re-produces an old-time picture, faithful in detail and true in colour. The ballad refers to the murder of the Earl of Douglas by King James II. in Stirling Castle, in February, 1452.

DOUGLAS (1452).

THE lady has left her dainty bower,
And she stands with her maidens in Douglas tower.

She looked o'er dale, and she looked o'er down,—
"I would I had news from Stirling town !

"All night in my chamber the death-watch beat,
And the stag-hound moaned as he lay at my feet.

"The wild night-wind rang the castle bell,
And a corpse light shone in St. Bride's chapelle.

"I dreamed that low in the holy shrine
I knelt at the feet of our Mother divine ;

"And, each one shrouded in sable hood,
Around the altar the dead monks stood ;

"And loud they sang in the sacred fane,
But it was not the matin or vesper strain ;

- “For while in the wind the wild bell rang,
A mass for the dead the dead monks sang.”
- She looked o’er dale and she looked o’er down—
“Oh, that I had news from Stirling town?”
- “Lo, yonder comes one who rides with speed—
All flecked with foam is his weary steed.
- “’Tis Alan, the harper, with locks o’ grey,
Who rode by our lord when he marched away.”
- “Now tell me, Alan, what news ye bring;
How fares my lord with the wily king?”
- “Oh, the trumpets brayed and the drums did beat,
When the king and our lord rode up the street;
- “And the bells were ringing in Stirling town,
When the king and the knight to the wine sat down.
- “But long ere the morning sun did shine,
There was blood on the hands that birlled the wine.
- “And, stark and stiff in the morning grey,
The grimly corpse of the Douglas lay.”

The following song by Mr. Fraser, has attained a wide popularity. It has been set to music in a charming and dramatic way by Berger, suitable for bass or baritone, and wherever it is sung it has always received a decided and appreciative welcome from the audience.

THE BORDER MAIDEN.

- A MAIDEN sat lone in her greenwood bower,
A sunbeam fell on her golden hair;
And she sang as she wove the silken flower
In the banner her own true love should bear.
For home must be guarded whatever betide,
And the brave lads of Yarrow must saddle and ride
When the beacon is lit on the Border.
- The war cry rang through the morning grey—
Oh, bravely our lads of the Border fought!
And aye in the thick of the deadly fray,
Shone the silken banner the maiden wrought.
For home must be guarded whatever betide,
And the brave lads of Yarrow must saddle and ride
When the beacon is lit on the Border.
- A knight on the moorland brown and bare,
Lies cold and dead when the fight is done;
And the maiden will mourn in her wild despair,
When the spearmen return at the set o’ the sun.

But home must be guarded whatever betide,
And the brave lads of Yarrow to death must ride
When the bale-fire gleams red o'er the Border.

A very chaste set of verses are these by Mr. Fraser.
They will leave a sweet after-taste with the reader.

LOVE MEMORIES.

Ay, lad, it was here that we lingered
In the hush of that sweet June night,
Till the larks were up, and the cloudless east
Was flushed with rosy light ;
And a redbreast, out on the hawthorn there,
Was trilling a low sweet lay
To its mate, and the wee brown birds that slept
In the nest on the bending spray.

It was at your grandfather's wedding, lad,
That Jenny and I had been ;
And I was the bravest of all the lads
And she of the girls was queen.
And homeward we walked through the dewy fields,
When the dancing and mirth were o'er,
And I stood with her dear little hand in mine,
Here, under the porch by the door.

There was never a soul astir in the house,
But all was as still as could be ;
And even although they had all been awake,
They could never have seen her and me,—
For the ivy was thick, and we whispered so low—
Oh, they ne'er could have heard us there,
As she gave me a wild red rose from the flowers
She had worn in her beautiful hair.

Oh the passionate love of life's springtide !
Though now I am old and grey,
Each low-murmured word I remember as well
As if it were yesterday ;
How I thrilled at the touch of the soft brown hair
That over her shoulders curled ;
And trembled for joy when I dared to kiss
The rosiest lips in the world !

Get me a bit of the blossom, lad,
That breathes on the hawthorn-tree,
And leave me here till I dream awhile
Of the life that was never to be ;
For the shadows and phantoms of long ago
I see through a mist of tears,
Your life lies hid in the coming, lad,
But mine in the bygone, years.

WILLIAM FREELAND.



Faithfully Yours,
William Freeland,

SOME pictures are painted with such broad massive sweeps of the brush that, with one glance, we are wafted to the seashore, and hear the roll of the broad Atlantic as it spends itself on the rocky cliffs beyond ; or, it may be, we find ourselves overawed by that profound stillness which pervades the scene, where the mighty hills, o'ertopped by the clouds, form the only prospect that meets

the eye. Near this painting may hang a conscientious study of what we would carelessly term brushwood, a picture demanding our keenest scrutiny before we are rewarded by a sight of its many beauties ; and, verily, the careful student has his reward, for a closer inspection reveals the fact that every detail has been carefully wrought out, each twig, yea, almost all the tiny creatures that dwell under the shadow of the overhanging branches, have been the subject of laborious work, till every square inch of the canvas becomes a picture in itself, and then—

“ each blade of grass did yield
The vision of a far green field.”

The superficial observer of Nature little reckons what is lost to him every day he wanders forth on this fair earth of ours.

We can well remember walking leisurely along the shores of the larger Cumbræ one beautiful summer day. The picturesque old battle-ground that lies to the south of Largs, on the other shore of the Fairlie Roads, was clothed in bright sunshine, and away behind us we could discern the peaks of Arran fast receding from our view as we veered round the northern end of the Island. A friend who was with us plucked a tiny blossom that had not in a garden grown. Soon we were peering into the flower, and there was revealed in infinite variety of hue, the delicate pencilling of the creative Artist, and, in its lovely form, the chaste moulding of the Divine Potter.

There, by the wayside, was the Germander Speedwell growing in small but luxuriant clusters, with its blue and lilac-tinted petals. Here the Eyebright and Wild Thyme, companions in this low-hung picture of Nature. Up in the background hedge, Nipple Wort (the favourite of Ruskin) was to be seen streaking the hawthorn-leaved sky, surrounded by a halo of Bramble and Rosebud. The characteristics or habits of each flower our friend pointed out, and we went on our way feeling that for the moment a new world had been opened up to our wondering gaze.

It is as the bard of Nature that we admire Mr. William Freeland, revealing its myriad tints, revelling in the singing of the birds ; the notes of every separate songster seeming to be familiar to his ear. He finds a song in every murmur

of the brooklet, and the tiniest creature in the wood is photographed in his verse.

His "Birth Song," "Dawn," "In Spynie Wood," "The Tragedy of the Nightingale," and his sonnet to "The Winter Daisy," all bring back to us that keen flush of delight with which we first read Thomson's "Seasons."

Listen to these lines from "The Tragedy of the Nightingale." It is descriptive of the effect on the lowly inhabitants of the glade, caused by a supposed rebellion of the other songsters against that "soft-winged bird of unobtrusive hue"—

THEY mocked the Nightingale, who calmly stood,
And eyed them as they chattered in the wood,
Which so re-echoed with their shameful din,
That the quaint, sinless folk who dwelt therein
Were startled in their cells, where they had lain
Drinking the Nightingale's delicious strain,
And now came rushing forth to hear and see
What the unwonted babblement might be.
The flustered mouse keeked from his mossy pillow,
A ghost of ruin mirrored in his e'e ;
The brindled snail, housed by a quiet willow,
Oozed from his spiral palace one small horn,
As babes might thrust their fists into the morn
To grasp at thunderclaps. The dainty squirrel—
True gardener of the empire surely born—
Hiding an acorn for his winter store,
Paused in his labour, nor remembered more,
His antique brain received so strange a whirl.

The rabbit from his burrow edged an ear
And eye of wonder, tremulous with fear ;
For never had he heard before or seen
Such impious measures in the forest green.
The jolly bee, wide-plunging merrily home,
Staggered, astonished ; and, before he knew,
Though quite within three flower-calls of his comb,
Spilt his sweet burden—honey-globes like dew—
Which a sly tomtit, seeing, speedily sipt,
And through the greenery of the dingle dipt.

That line describing the bee "within three flower-calls of his comb," reveals a delicate artistic touch. We can well believe that the writer of such exquisite lines is fond of getting away at times from the busy haunts of men. Mr. Freeland speaks from the heart when he sings—

GIVE me a nook and a book,
 And let the proud world spin round :
 Let it scramble by hook or by crook
 For wealth or a name with a sound.
 You are welcome to amble your ways,
 Aspirers to place or to glory ;
 May big bells jangle your praise,
 And golden pens blazon your story !
 For me let me dwell in my nook,
 Here, by the curve of this brook,
 That croons to the tune of my book,
 Whose melody wafts me for ever
 On the waves of an unseen river.

Give me a book and a nook
 Far away from the glitter and strife ;
 Give me a staff and a crook,
 The calm and the sweetness of life :
 Let me pause—let me brood as I list
 On the marvels of heaven's own spinning,
 Sunlight and moonlight and mist,
 Glorious without slaying or sinning.
 Vain world let me reign in my nook,
 King of this kingdom, my book,
 A region by fashion forsook :
 Pass on, ye lean gamblers for glory,
 Nor mar the sweet tune of my story !

Mr. William Freeland has risen from the ranks. Born at Kirkintilloch, Dumbartonshire, in 1828, his education, like most of his station was but scanty, and he was early apprenticed to one of the finer branches of calico printing. He did not remain long in that capacity, but removed to Glasgow, where every opportunity for the cultivation of his mind was taken advantage of, and in his thirtieth year he obtained from Dr. (then Mr.) Hedderwick the post of sub-editor of the old *Weekly Citizen*. As Mr. Edwards remarks, in his biography of Mr. Freeland, "It may well be assumed that already he had given indications of more than ordinary ability, when he was appointed by so discriminating a judge as Mr. Hedderwick to the important post of sub-editor of a journal of the literary calibre of the *Weekly Citizen*."

Mr. F. H. Underwood, in his admirable sketch of J. Greenleaf Whittier, when speaking of the time when the young Quaker poet, at the age of twenty-one, became editor

of a newspaper, said, "Like some fortunate orators, who think while on their legs before an audience, Whittier gained his education, his power as a writer, and his mastery of verse by his incessant industry in writing." In a modified degree the same may be applied to Mr. Freeland. Thirty years ago newspapers were not "run" at the same high-pressure rate of speed as they are now, and more time could be allowed for the literary portion of the publications, and the young sub-editor would be able to feel his way and profit by each day's experience to the extension of his ideas and the growth of his own abilities.

The year 1866 saw the subject of this sketch on the staff of the *Glasgow Herald*, and for years he was engaged on the *Evening Times*, owned by the *Herald* proprietors. It is only the other day that Mr. Freeland retired from active duty to enjoy his well-earned leisure, and that with the esteem and recognition of his employers. In 1872 Mr. Freeland published "Love and Treason," a novel in three volumes on the subject of the Glasgow "Radical Risings" of 1820. The story appeared first in the columns of the *Weekly Herald*, and created much interest then, as well as in the collected form.

In May 1882, Messrs. James MacLehose & Sons published our author's volume of verse, "A Birth Song and other Poems," which collection received a well-merited note of welcome from all lovers of genuine poetry.

It was during the period of his connection with the *Weekly Citizen* that Mr. Freeland and the young poet of "The Luggie," David Gray, became acquainted; a friendship that ripened as the days passed, and only ended with that last farewell of the dying youth when he wrote in these words, "Before I enter that nebulous, uncertain, land of shadowy notions and tremulous wonderings—standing on the threshold of the sun and looking back—I cry thee, O beloved! a last farewell, lingeringly, passionately, without tears." To both of them the fragrance of home lent a supreme beauty to the "Sweet Luggie and sylvan Bothlin." Mr. Freeland, in his beautiful poem "The Town," pays loving tribute to his departed poet-friend, to whom in his ill-health he was one of the most regular and welcome of visitors:

AND where is he, dear son of song,
 Who walked beside me, bright as morn,
 Burning to cope with that high throng
 Of men, the first, and mightiest born?
 I heard him sing; I saw him shine,
 The moon of love, the son of truth;
 He thrilled me with his tender line,
 The beauty of his mortal youth:
 God loved him most—the sweet lambled-soul,—
 And took him to His starry fold.

One joy the less, one grief the more,
 Are mine, since Life's pale shadow, Death,
 Met him on Fame's illusive shore,
 Wailing to heaven in passionate breath—
 "Oh! to be known among my kind!"
 That wish was like bewildering fire;
 It blurred the beauty of his mind,
 And clouded each divine desire,
 Said Death—"So be it; yet thou must die
 To gain thine immortality!"

A sudden and a fearful phrase,
 With double scope, and doubly true;
 For in his soul was nothing base—
 So God made Paradise his due.
 And now that he is known in heaven
 His name is dearly loved on earth—
 A May-white bloom untimely riven
 In the green valley of his birth:
 The earnest songs he warbled then,
 Still sing within the hearts of men.

He sleeps between his native streams,
 In that 'Auld Aisle' that fronts the south,
 Where he was lapped in living dreams;
 Where low he lies with songless mouth.
 The Luggie flows by Oxcang woods,
 The Bothlin Burn by Woodilee,
 In whose enchanting solitudes
 He woo'd his darling Poesy,
 Who, sorrowing, sits by Bothlin Burn,
 Or broods beside her hero's urn.

Mr. Freeland's big-hearted admiration for kindred genius is repeatedly given voice, note his "Blind Poetess," "Elegy on a Local Poet," etc.

Longfellow at times gives expression, as it were, to an afterthought that seems to strike the singer while the sound of his last note floats in the air; a notable example is

contained in that poet's loving tribute to the genius of Burns—

“ I see amid the fields of Ayr
A ploughman, who, in foul and fair,
Sings at his task
So clear, we know not if it is
The laverock’s song we hear, or his,
Nor care to ask.”

In one or two verses of his poem "Antermony," Mr. Freeland takes up the same style of expression with good effect. Take this verse for instance—

We roamed in joy that heathery clime,
Nor feared eternity nor time ;
With all the hours around us streaming
We dreamed, nor dreamed that we were dreaming.

In the closing lines of his sonnet "The Winter Daisy," the dreary season, when Nature is dead and all living things seem to cry in vain for bread, is beautifully lightened up with a gleam of hope as

Lo, the holy sign !
A half-blown daisy lends her patient gleam
And all the world is clothed in light divine.

Thus giving a fine illustration of J. Russell Lowell's contention that a sonnet should "burst with a wave-like up-gathering at the end."

The feelings of the Highlanders banished from their native glens, their eyes no more to rise to the summit of their native mountains ; no more to feel the spring of the heather beneath their feet ; or the glad exultant note in their voices as the pibroch resounds o'er hill and dale, surely never found truer interpretation than in these strong lines of Mr. Freeland's.

A FAREWELL.

O COME away, and leave a land
Where is no longer room to stand,
Or shelter for an aged head,
Or for the baby milk or bread.
Leave the sole hunter in his glen
Once happy with the homes of men ;
Leave him his hundred miles of grouse
And deer, and his great palace house ;

Leave him the salmon in the river—
'Tis only his, and his forever :
Leave him our little croft and cot,
They hurt the landscape like a blot ;
Far better is a homeless waste
To beauty's eye and cultured taste.
Put out the fire, it stains the air
With smoke that but offends the fair,
Whose nostril, delicate and fine,
Can bear no odours undivine.
Farewell, sweet glen ! old home !—away !
Come, dearest wife, we must not stay.
See, the just law, in belt and plume !
And hark, the ocean moaning doom !
Behold the ship that hovers near :
Why linger we ? Nay, have no fear !
Tears ! and the child sobs !
 Heavenly God !
They tear our hearts from the dear sod !

JOHN GILKISON.



J Gilkison

HOW indelible are the impressions made on the plastic mind of youth by the scenes and associations which formed the colouring and circumstances of our childhood.

In after years, 'mid all the worry and bustle of life, it needs but the perfume of a certain flower, the note of one of the denizens of the wood, the sight of the thin blue-grey wreaths of smoke rising from a cottage chimney, to send the lump into the throat, to start a tear down the cheek, as pictures of auld lang synn come up before our mental vision, like the forms

that shape themselves among the glowing embers, when in the winter fore-night :—

“ We pensively gaze in the flickering blaze,
And the memoried past recall.”

John Gilkison never saw the forms of the tall, graceful poplars, or heard the sough of the night-wind through their branches as it rose and fell, now fierce and loud like the scream of a frightened bird, or, anon, faint and low, like the tremulous bleatings of the lambs on the hillside, but he thought of his grandfather's farm in Ireland where he spent many happy years of his youth.

His grandfather was a presbyterian—an original seceder according to the strictest notions of the sect. A strict disciplinarian, he sent John to bed, never later than seven or eight o'clock, to a little room beneath the rafters with one window in the gable. This window John always kept open for the sake of the company of the tall poplars. And we can fancy that, to a child of strong imagination the eeriness of that little loft with its boisterous companions swaying to and fro in the sweep of the gale, would be as attractive as when these same trees took fantastic shapes in the clear moonlight of a calm peaceful evening.

Peep-o-day saw John afoot, and, with his school books under his arm, away cow-herding till breakfast hour came round. These were the hours of golden-hued tints, that came back long after to brighten the sadder, more sombre days of later years. Then, he learned the deep mysteries of the dawn, as he lay gazing at the varying combinations of colour, the oranges, the golds, the flaming ruddy-reds : no two mornings alike in character, a sublime and glorified kaleidoscope that never repeated itself.

In the early summer mornings he got on terms of friendliest intimacy with the inhabitants of the great Irish hedgerows—hedgerows that were left to Nature's gardening—with the chaffinches, the goldfinches, the linnets, and the thrushes.

The old man was very strict in his supervision of the books which were read by his grandchild, and had a most decided antipathy to light reading : novels being considered an abomination and a snare. In this connection an amusing

and curious incident of Mr. Gilkison's boyhood is worth relating. John, while at school in Ireland, became intimate with two of his class-mates, sons of Mr. Heron the minister. These boys were nephews of the late Captain Mayne Reid, and soon, in exchange for the illustrated papers, "Arabian Nights," and certain other novelties sent John from Glasgow by his father, he received, in loan, copies of the novelist's works, and was soon deep in the entertaining pages of "Afloat in the Forest," and other volumes from the same pen.

The grandfather, then over seventy years of age, began to suspect that all was not right with these books, even although they did come from the manse. The old man was keen-witted, and, possibly, his suspicions may have been aroused by observing the absorbing interest which these volumes awakened in the mind of his young charge. John proposed to read a chapter to his grandfather, which was agreed to, and there and then the youth launched his good old protector into the midst of Mayne Reid's full company. The impossible nigger, the comic Irishman, the villainous red-skin, the miraculously youthful hero and heroine, etc. The effect was curious. The aged presbyterian's fancy and imagination were awakened and stirred, as if by sudden conversion, and the lad did not get to bed that night till he had finished the story. Thereafter for many weeks the old man sat in his chair by the hearth, reading volume after volume of the Captain's stories, with an avidity only to be expected in youth, but at last rose up from the task red-eyed and strange looking, and gave orders, in tones not to be mistaken, that the books were, forthwith, to be returned to the manse. Then the good old man, his brief and only experience in the realm of fiction-reading over, put himself through a severe course of "Baxter's Saints' Rest," with a view to a restoration to that more saintly atmosphere with which his mind had ever been accustomed.

We have introduced our friend John Gilkison to the reader through his Irish connection and experiences of full purpose, for the impressions of that time have coloured unmistakably almost all of his literary achievement, and moulded to a large extent his mode of thought. He imbibed the happy, buoyant, Hibernian nature which enabled him to

keep a stiff heart to many a stey brae. His humour was as sparkling and roguish as that of many a son of Erin who has worthily maintained the characteristics of his race. He could change his tongue and speak to an Ulster man as to a brother, and the repartee would need to be keen and sharp that would find him halting behind. These are the characteristics of the man when in the company of genial, convivial souls: among folks, where, to use an expression of his own, a man may sit in his shirt sleeves. It was only there we saw his eye flash with that bright, sparkling light which betokened in him the presence of genuine wit and humour; in an assemblage of strangers we would have perceived a quiet, common-place looking individual.

John Gilkison was born in the Gorbals of Glasgow. In his sixth year he made his first visit to his grandfather's farm, and from that time till he was sixteen years of age he led a kind of double existence, with two sets of circumstances, which gave a kind of dual aspect to the days of his youth. One week he was busy at school or at play in the Gorbals district of our city, the next, environed by the surroundings of a rural farm in the sister isle. The one evening dreaming amid the solitudes of the moorland or among the brushwood of the bosky glen, the next, immersed in the noise and bustle of life in a Glasgow street.

In his sixteenth year he was back in Glasgow for good, and apprenticed to the umbrella making in the employment of Messrs. Wilson, Mathieson & Co., of this city: which firm he served faithfully, boy and man, for twenty years.

John had a humorous explanation, which we have heard him give as to why he was not an artist, or a musician, or an actor. One day at school he was busy with his slate. It was the hour for arithmetic. On one side of John's slate was the sum just about finished, on the other he was busy sketching the battle of Alma, a British victory but a few weeks old. All at once he was struck by a bolt from the blue, right on the knuckles. It turned out on closer inspection to be only a little thick-set, boxwood ruler used by the master, but all the same it made every nerve-fibre in his arm tingle for an hour. He never attempted to draw again, and but for that incident, he was wont pawkily to add, "I might have been hob-nobbing with Tom M'Ewan, James Aitken,

or David Murray—or stretched out at my ease on a nice bit of pavement in a city street.”

He had always a strong fancy to be a violinist, but his aspirations in that direction were dissipated during his second quarter's tuition, through sustaining an accident to the top joint of one of the fingers of his left hand, thereby rendering him unable to finger the strings to any good purpose.

He had thoughts also of strutting the stage, but in two years' membership of the David Garrick Club he attained no higher position than to be cast for the rôle of the sailor in “The Rent Day,” and the dream of the footlights and the applause of the surging multitude died away, and left as it were, but a memory of the coloured glare that had heightened the effect of the transformation scene.

Early in his youth Mr. Gilkison began to dabble in literature. He was at the birth and death of two of Glasgow's short-lived comic productions, the *Wizard* and the *Bee*. The *Jean Byde Papers*, by “Yorick Glasguensis,”—the premier number of which contained a humorous skit on the first meeting of the Glasgow School Board,—were from the pen of Mr. Gilkison. The first of those papers was published on 1st April, 1873, and had a large circulation.

Mr. Gilkison wrote the late Mr. Charles Bernard's first Gaiety Pantomime, he adapted the next, and wrote part of many succeeding Christmas “Extras.” Such songs as “The Calico Ball,” and “What's wrang wi' you?” were written by our friend, and, at the time were immensely popular.

Some years ago he wrote for Messrs. Maclure & Macdonald of this city, a series of children's toy story books, and, as showing the genial, happy nature of the man, he has often been heard to remark that no bit of literary work ever gave him greater pleasure than the writing of these same story books.

Mr. Gilkison was also the author of one or two serial stories. It is as a poet, however, that we mean to treat our subject, and in his volume “The Minister's Fiddle and other Poems,” published by Messrs. A. Bryson & Co., of this city, there is plenty of material to whet our appetite and arouse our literary faculty.

Mr. Gilkison is best, as has already been said, in his Irish pieces. His poem entitled “The O'Gorman's Gate” is

strong in conception and dramatic in treatment; unfortunately, however, it is too long for quotation. His lines entitled "The Skinning of the Ould Cow: an Irish Legend of the April Borrowing Days" are full of that Hibernian wit, which Mr. Gilkison seemed to have inherited in full share from his mother, who was a native of the land of the shamrock. We give the poem in part. In the hands of a capable reader this piece, as also his "Garscaddens Last Drinking Bout,"—written specially for Mr. Donald MacLeod's "Poets and Poetry of the Lennox,"—would make splendid recitations.

ON a slope of Slievegallon, near the town of Killmoughery,
 There grazed an ould cow on the farm of Jim Loughery;
 And though an ould stripper, there ne'er was a better,
 With limbs like a greyhound, and eyes like a setter.
 And all through the winter, 'mid frost, sleet, or snow,
 In byre, or in field, or where'er she might go,
 She'd wag her ould tail,
 Strong as blackthorn flail,
 In the deepest of scorn as the north wind would blow.

So to pull down her pride
 All the months went aside,
 And into conspiracy straightway did go,
 And swore a deep oath they would lay that cow low!
 'I'll choke her with fog,' says scowling November;
 'I'll bury her alive,' says black-browed December;
 Says January and February, 'Lave her to us,
 We'll finish her nicely without any fuss.'
 When up steps bould March,
 With a smile grim and arch,
 And says 'I'm the bhoys that will soon make her whisht, for
 I swear, by my honour,
 Such a storm I'll bring on her,
 I'll send her to pot with a tearing nor'-easter.

March with his bleak showers and withering blasts, did his utmost, and at length seemed to triumph over old "crummie," but no—

. . . the very best part of the story comes now,
 For out of the furrough leaps up the ould cow,
 The artful ould stripper, she'd only been schaming,
 And March he stared at her, and thought he'd been draming;
 And 'Hurroo!' says the cow as her tail up she set,
 'By my faith, March, my bhoys, sure I'm not skinned yet!'
 So March on the spot, sir, went stark, staring mad,
 And from that day to this he always takes bad

About this time of year, and borrows three days
 From purty young April, who humours his ways ;
 And in his mad rage he has always to fall on
 The ghost of a cow,
 That no one sees now,
 For she's dead long ago on the slopes of Slievegallon.

We have heard it said of a celebrated painter of old time, that he never completed a picture, and no matter how sacred the subject, but away in the background was to be seen the figure of an imp grinning satanically at his uncongenial surroundings.

This story was recalled to our memory as we read the lines by Mr. Gilkison, entitled, "A Memory of George Ewing's Studio." The third stanza of that poem is a magnificent sonnet on the genius of the sculptor, that might be termed the birth of a marble statue. We quote the lines.

THEN, see this great rough block without a stain,
 A block of marble without form and void,
 That in the bosom of the earth hath lain
 Since youthful Time usurped old Chaos' reign,
 Yet bearing in its core, and ne'er annoyed
 Through all the changes that the world hath gone
 Some spirit of this thing we look upon.

And now, the time being come, a power is sent,
 The power creative some men genius call,
 And he to whom that God-like gift is lent
 Doth free it from its Hades of grim stone,
 Doth break away its marble prison wall,
 And call upon it to stand forth alone.
 And lo ! see where it comes, a living part
 Of fair created marble to this world of Art.

And then in the closing stanza of the poem we note the prototype of the painter's imp, as the poet descends in one bound from the sublime to the ridiculous.

And now who's this lies here in saddest guise,
 With sprawling limbs that rest in stiffest rigour
 With vacant face, and grim lack-lustre eyes,
 And garb of modern times?—a poor lay figure.
 Where he reclines perhaps a moral lies,
 His nether limbs encased in Hyam's trousers,
 'Tween him and aught around exist no ties—

There's satire in it that would seem to rouse us—
But he, with weariness, and heart of lead,
With wooden fingers clasps his wooden head.

For a number of years Mr. Gilkison was in business in Dunbarton. Then he was situated as clerk in one of the Corporation departments for some years, but the severe winter of 1895 told fatally upon a constitution that never was strong, and the sods were laid over the remains of as genial and gentle a soul as it has been our fortune to meet.

JAMES HEDDERWICK, LL.D.



James Hedderwick.

UNQUESTIONABLY one of the books of its season, was that delightful volume of "Backward Glances" that came from the pen of Dr. Hedderwick, and was published in 1891 by Messrs. Blackwood & Son.

In kaleidoscopic fashion, Old Glasgow of fifty or sixty years ago passes before our mental vision. We stand in Saint Enoch Square, and, in quaint humour, comes the query, "Have the innocent sheep that were wont peacefully to quarter here been frightened away by the continual clatter of cabs?"

We turn to ascertain who puts the question and we seem to see only a finger beckoning us ; so careful is the Doctor that his personality should not obtrude.

We follow him eastward to the foot of Glassford Street and we feel as if he had opened the door of the little "snuggery" in the late David Robertson's shop and ushered us in, and we find ourselves in the literary "howff" of the "Whistle Binkie," and other worthies, William Motherwell, the author of "Jeanie Morrison" ; William Kennedy, author of "Fitful Fancies" ; "Sandy" Rodger, J. D. Carrick, William Miller, the "laureate of the nursery" ; Dr. Strang, author of "Glasgow and its Clubs" ; Andrew Henderson, compiler of "Scottish Proverbs," etc.

"Stepping westward" our guide, philosopher, and friend, recalls to mind the Edinburgh notables he has met in that same room in days gone by—Robert Gilfillan, the author of "Why left I my Hame?" ; James Ballantine of "Gaberlunzie" fame ; Captain Charles Gray, and others.

He pauses at the head of Queen Street trying to catch the "caw, caw" of the rooks that was wont to be a characteristic of the place long ago, but—we were going to say, alas—the shriek of the steam whistle, instead, fills the air.

Dr. James Hedderwick was born in this city on the 18th of January, 1814.

When he was eight years old, his father determined to leave the old country and with his family emigrated to America. A few months sojourn there, however, seemed to have sufficed to show the elder Hedderwick that neither the climate nor the people on the other side would agree with his notion of things, and, the title of Robert Gilfillan's song, "Why left I my Hame," ringing in his ear, he took ship for Liverpool, and, once more, became a citizen of Saint Mungo. The son was apprenticed to the printing trade in his father's office, but the lad's tastes being decidedly of a literary turn he was sent to London University in his sixteenth year. While there he carried off the first prize in the rhetoric class. James Hedderwick gained his first newspaper experiences while his father printed the *Argus*, which he did during 1832, the first year that paper was published.

The Doctor's purely literary reminiscences are matters of extreme interest. His furthest back "glance" is at the day, when but a boy, he journeyed by coach to Edinburgh. The capital, with its historic associations, was of great interest to a lad bookishly inclined, but his whole soul was absorbed with the idea to see Sir Walter Scott. As he says, "The shadow of the great man was over me! I felt under the spell of the mighty enchanter, and I soon made my way to Parliament House, in the hope of seeing him in the flesh." This he did; Sir Walter sitting as one of the clerks of the Court.

Young James Hedderwick was only twenty-three years of age when he was appointed sub-editor of the *Scotsman*, and the five years spent in that capacity were fraught with valuable training and experience, and were filled with many happy memories. It was a daily occurrence with him to see, in Princes Street, the robust "Christopher North" or the venerable Dr. Chalmers, or to catch a glimpse of the rugged features of Hugh Miller, or the slim figure of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. He was twice asked to meet De Quincey at dinner but the famous opium eater failed to turn up on both occasions. Francis Jeffrey, Lord Cockburn, the brothers Combe, John Hill Burton, the historian, were all known to him; the latter intimately. He was present in the Music Hall when Thomas Babington Macaulay gave his great electioneering speech in 1840.

David Vedder, the Orcadian sketcher and poet he well knew. He came to be on intimate terms with the brothers Chambers, and let us pause here to cull one of the many good stories with which "Backward Glances" abounds. The Messrs. Chambers were to receive the freedom of their native burgh, Peebles, and had asked a number of friends to accompany them and to partake of the dinner that was to close the day's proceedings. Before the hour for dinner arrived, a stroll to Neidpath Castle was suggested. Three of the party, Ballantine, Smidert, and James Hedderwick, led the company; Robert Gilfillan, Captain Gray, and others bringing up the rear. Getting to the castle the foremost of the company found a boy seated in a staircase-window reading.

Ballantine, taking a copy of Gilfillan's volume of songs, thrust it into the boy's hands, desiring him to keep reading

it diligently. Poor Gilfillan ! He came up quite unsuspectingly, and at once fell into the trap. Clapping the little man on the shoulder, he asked, in his kindly way, what book he was reading. He then started in an ecstasy. "Good life !" he shouted, "it's my poems. There's fame, gentlemen ! there's fame !"

When James Hedderwick left Edinburgh in 1842, he was entertained to supper ; the late Mr. Charles Maclaren, then editor of the *Scotsman*, occupying the chair, with Mr. John Hill Burton as croupier. To the late Mr. Maclaren's memory our author returns again and again throughout the volume, and always with the highest respect and esteem.

Returning to his native city, Dr. (then Mr.) James Hedderwick started the *Glasgow Citizen*, a weekly publication which attained a high standing as a literary periodical, while it retained many of the functions of a weekly newspaper. In the columns of that same paper the first effusions of many honoured sons of Glasgow and the West first saw the light of print, including the late David Wingate, Scotia's collier poet ; the late James Macfarlan, another genuine child of the muse ; William Freeland, who is still with us, but whose note, unfortunately, is not so often heard as in the days gone by ; the late David Gray, the poet of "the Luggie ;" the late Hugh Macdonald (the gentle "Caleb") author of "Rambles round Glasgow" ; William Black, the well-known novelist, and others.

In 1862 *Hedderwick's Miscellany*, a purely literary periodical was launched, which only ceased to exist on the advent, in 1864, of the *Evening Citizen*, a newspaper that has been a very great success from its commencement.

Dr. Hedderwick's first published work was a volume of poems, which appeared in 1844. Fifteen years later, his volume, entitled, "Lays of Middle Age, and other Poems," came from the press of Messrs. Macmillan & Co ; a second edition, somewhat altered—so far, at least, as the "other Poems" are concerned—having been published by Messrs. Blackwood eight years ago.

In his poem entitled "Thought Pictures," which is included in his "Lays of Middle Age," Dr. Hedderwick portrays in language the simplest, and yet most expressive,

the beauty and joy of summer time. The second stanza is nothing less than an exquisite village idyll, replete with music and charming imagery :

The tawny herd-boy wields his wand of power
O'er nibbled mountain steeps ; nor knows nor thinks
How bless'd his station, nor what golden links
Of memory he forgeth hour by hour.

The fragrant kine lie languid in the heat ;
Half-hid in leaves and smoke the village dreams ;
The river glideth at the angler's feet ;
Child voices cheer the glade where beauty gleams
In many a sunny glint and simple flower.

In the lines entitled, "Passed Away," which open thus :—

Peace dwells at last with poor Elizabeth,
Wife of my trusted friend.

We have often been struck with the thought that is expressed in the second verse :—

But passed is every fear ;
Stilled by the mystery that would not start
Although a cannon thundered at her ear—
Although her little infant cried with pain.

It is only a poet of deep, reflective mind who would have thus placed the infant cries in stronger light than the cannon's thunder. 'Tis a tender tribute to motherly love, and even Crabbe has nothing finer.

In 1862 Dr. Hedderwick wrote a memoir of the late David Gray, which, along with an introductory notice from the pen of that staunch friend of struggling literary genius, the late Lord Houghton, prefixed the young poet's dream of a life, "The Luggie." Only a poet could have written the life of David Gray. "His life," to use Dr. Hedderwick's own words, "which embraced only his passionate youth-time, was tremulously, almost morbidly, fanciful ;" a less sympathetic biographer would only have seen arrogance and conceit where Dr. Hedderwick saw and realised the consciousness of power that absorbed the soul of the youth and made him so sing and write of the things he felt.

"The Villa by the Sea : and other Poems ;" James Mac-Lehose, 1881 ;" is the title of Dr. Hedderwick's next essay in the field of letters. Three years previously our own

University had honoured itself by conferring upon him the honorary degree of LL.D.

From the volume, "The Villa by the Sea," we naturally turn to the narrative poem "Hooted and Hissed" for quotation rather than to the poem which gives its title to the book. It opens with describing the meeting of two kindred souls—Joe the poet, and his friend the actor. There was that one touch which made their friendship sincere, for—

They both had proved how hard it was
Up Fame's tough steep to toil.

They had been comparing notes, and they were of sombre tint, for it was of their failures they spoke; but listen to the story as told by our poet :

Then the actor said—'It is death to fail,
But Troubadour! be you blithe,
For though the critics your verse assail,
They do not see you writhe.'

'They never fail,' quoth the poet Joe,
'Who are pleased themselves to please;'
'But a hiss,' cried the actor, "is like a blow
To a heart that is ill at ease.'

'But Joe, man, good Joe! nay, hear me still;
'Tis now many years, alas!
Just pause until I my pipe refill,
And they fetch you another glass.
Ere I tell what I had nigh forgot,
Of the night that I was hiss'd:
Few words will serve, 'tis a simple plot;
And some scenes may well be missed.

'It, came, Joe! the day, the eve, the hour,
But my feelings I could not quell,
And there broke from my eyes a little shower
As I bade my boy farewell!
He told me "the piece would be a hit,"
And gave me a cheery smile;
Then added—"I will not weary a bit,
For you'll be but a little while.'

'I donn'd the dress of a mountebank,
I dabbled my grief with paint,
And I read till my eyes became a blank
For the print was confused and faint;

And aye between my eyes and the book
 Came features I could not chase—
 'Twas now of the fiend with the bold bad look,
 And now of that thin pale face.

' But the stage was waiting, and on I went,
 With a jest on my quivering lips,
 And I scarcely knew what the laughter meant
 In the depth of my eclipse,
 Until at length a hiss arose,
 For I could not speak my part ;
 Oh ! I felt as if my throat would close,
 Through the bursting of my heart.

' Mute orchestra, and hissing pit,
 And gay boxes, tier on tier,
 And aloft where the gods in judgment sit,
 And footlights and chandelier,
 In my stagger'd brain went whirling round,
 While each word my tongue could form
 Was but as a cry of the drowning, drown'd
 In the roar of a mighty storm.

' Then a thought of dying struck me dumb,
 Though the prompter shouted loud :
 The words to my lips refused to come,
 And I look'd at the jeering crowd ;
 They saw not the little piteous face,
 They knew not the torture here,
 They only mock'd at my meek grimace,
 And laugh'd at my helpless tear.'

The actor staggered homewards, to where he left his sick
 child, and in words of touching pathos we read :

' I only wept o'er the face so wan
 That an hour ago had smiled ;
 I only sat, like a palsied man,
 Alone with my stone-dead child.'

In these days when monuments are sought to be raised
 to perpetuate the memory of men whose only claim to the
 notice of the outside world lies in the fact that they left be-
 hind them so many thousands of pounds, and whose only
 "record" 'twere better to leave to the official notice of
 the commissary clerk, we feel it a public duty to quote,
 with all the emphasis they contain, these lines of Dr.
 Hedderwick's :

RICH ONLY.

THIS note came to me in a free, glad hand,
 Unblotted by a tear :—‘ Our millionaire
 Died yesternight. I pray you, sir prepare
 A tribute to his worth. You understand
 How best to word it.’ Flush’d with honest shame,
 I tore the insulting paper fiercely through,
 And gave its hundred atoms to the flames.
 Then thus I mused :—‘ Let the paid chisel hew
 Ill-fitting phrases at an heir’s command !

‘ The moveless marble will hold fast the lies
 To one untrusted spot ; and these the moss
 In time will cover, even as earth the dross
 Soon to be placed with tawdry obsequies,
 Where never Grief will hang her asphodel.
 No ink of mine shall be made substitute
 For the pure drops from Sorrow’s sacred well.
 Ah me ! the loudest epitaphs how mute
 To silent grassy mounds and weeping eyes !’

His death was buzz’d on ’Change, some said, ‘ Alas !
 How vain his wealth !’ Others, ‘ His hugest heap
 Could bribe not the Destroyer !’ Quiet his sleep,
 Now that a simple shroud is all he has.
 I breathe no censure ; what was due he paid—
 What owing he exacted ; he was just.
 But not for him will I a chaplet braid,
 Or to the spot where rests his unloved dust
 Mislead one pilgrim. Let the poor man pass !

HENRY JOHNSTON.



THE "Shepherd" at one of the "Noctes" said, in his strongly assertive manner, "Wi' respeck to mere literary men, oh dear me, sir! hoo I do gaunt when they come to Mount Benger! They canna shute, they canna fish, they canna loup, they canna warsle, they canna soom, they canna put the stane, they canna fling the hammer, they canna even drive a gig, they canna kiss a lassie in a aff-haun and pleasant manner, without offendin' her feelin's, as through the dew's she 'comes wadin' all alane'; and what's

perhaps the maist contemptible o' a', they canna, to ony effect, drink whusky."

The latter disqualification we will not stay to discuss, even although we have before our mind Burns's dictum.

Leeze me on drink, it gi'es us mair
Than either school or college,
It kindles wit, it waukens lear,
It pangs us fu' o' knowledge.

But with much of the foregoing we can well agree, for a reference to the preceding conversation between "Christopher North" and the Bard of Altrive indicates that what is meant by the *mere* literary man is the pretentious creature who sits in his room "where the farthing wick's burning" and attempts to describe human character from models fashioned out of his own brain, and who has as little notion of going to Mother Nature for his scenery as the artist, who, on looking out of his studio window on a wet blustery day, determined to stay in-doors and paint a landscape. Truly, as "James" said, "There's no a whut mair inspiration, or ravishment, or ridin', or climbin', or drinkin', about the bit versifying creturs, than there is about a grocer's clerk copying out an advertisement o' sweetsies for the newspapers."

The man who would describe Nature must be in keen sympathy with her every mood, he must be able to interpret every note in the gamut of the laverock's song as he warbles in the clear vault of the blue lift abune. He who would speak to us of men and women must write of them as he has found them in their everyday-struggle in the battle of life, must by actual contact be able to interpret the feelings that move the heart in times of sorrow, and have rejoiced with those that do rejoice.

And there is yet another view of literary men (whose numbers must have been very few in James Hogg's day) which we would especially emphasize. Many of our local *litterateurs* spend the heat of the day 'mid the bustle and worry of commercial life. Others give their undivided attention to their duties in the editorial rooms of the daily or weekly press; while some, again, earn their daily bread, literally by the sweat of their brow, in the workshop, or, it may be, down in the bowels of the earth, where God's sun

never lightens to cheer the weary hours. Yet these men can retire at the close of the day to their homes, and, the harness, as it were, thrown aside, devote themselves to their congenial pastime:—to wit, the production of literary work that betokens minds keenly alive to the beauties of nature, and as deeply versed in the many varied forms of human character that lie disclosed to the student of men and of things.

Such an one is the subject of our present article. For many years Mr. Henry Johnston has been a well-known figure in the life of numerous public organizations in Glasgow, and with him, as with many of his *confreres*, the wonder is that he has been able to accomplish so much sterling literary work, both in prose and verse, while giving to his duties during the day that strict and undivided attention which has borne fruit in the success of the institutions with which he is connected.

Mr. Johnston was born of Scotch parents in the North of Ireland, fifty-five years ago, but we may safely claim him as a Clydeside man, for he has resided in Glasgow since he was three years old. When a young man he was employed in one of our public offices in the city, and then his spare time was entirely devoted to attendance at classes where was laid the groundwork of that culture which has since been so fully amplified.

Over twenty years ago he became secretary of the Glasgow Athenæum, and his experiences at that time along with old Donald Clark, the faithful janitor,—when, as Mr. Johnston stated on one occasion, they had to perform between them the duties of secretary, superintendent, librarian, janitor, and boy—were, retrospectively speaking, humorous enough, but at the time almost tragic in their seriousness. After four and a half years' experience in this capacity he received the appointment of secretary to the Glasgow Western Infirmary, a position he still occupies. The esteem in which he was held by the Athenæum directors found vent in a handsome presentation and complimentary dinner on his resignation. Mr. Johnston is also secretary and treasurer to the Glasgow Hospital Sunday Fund, the Lady Hozier Convalescent Home at Lanark, and other schemes. His interest in, and contributions to literature have placed him in not a few honourable positions. For some years he was secretary of the Glasgow Ballad Club. Till recently he held important

official positions in connection with the Art Club and the Pen and Pencil Club of this city, in fact he was one of the founders of the latter association, but from these duties he found it necessary to withdraw on account of their encroachment on his literary leisure.

Mr. Johnston's first literary work appeared in the columns of the *Glasgow Weekly Citizen* over the *nom-de-plume* of 'Arthur,' when William Black the novelist wrote in the same pages under the name of 'Alton.' "Martha Spreull," a series of clever sketches which appeared in the columns of *Quiz*, was the work of Mr. Johnston's pen. These sketches have since appeared in book form. "The Dawsons of Glenara," (3 vols.), was published in 1877, by Sampson, Low & Marston, London; "The Mystery of Glenshiela," appeared in the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*. All these were issued anonymously.

Seven years ago, David Douglas, of Edinburgh, published the first volume bearing the author's name on the title-page. It is entitled "Chronicles of Glenbuckie," and a breeze off the Firth that spans from Cunningham to Arran seems to turn over the leaves of the volume as we read; so fresh and true is the portrayal of the scenery and characters in this Ayrshire seaboard parish at the Disruption times.

In 1891 Messrs. Ward & Downey published, in two volumes, "Kilmallie," a companion picture to "Chronicles of Glenbuckie," and which still further enhanced the author's reputation.

Mr. Johnston's latest work "Doctor Congalton's Legacy: a Chronicle of North Country By-Ways," came simultaneously from the press of Messrs. Methuen & Co., London, and Messrs. Scribner & Son, New York, last year. The scene of this homely and entertaining romance is supposed to be "Kilspindie" an Ayrshire village, as is quite evident from a perusal; Galston and other towns being mentioned as contiguous. The story opens with the reading of the will of the deceased village doctor, and a curious will it is. The doctor had willed the house to his brother George, a journalist by profession. The rest of the estate was to be divided into three equal parts, one to the brother, one to the niece, Eva, daughter of George Congalton, while the remaining portion was bequeathed to Miss Cowie, daughter of

Richard Cowie, farmer, Windy-Yett, whom the Doctor evidently intended his brother to marry, judging from the restrictions put upon the disposal of these portions, should either marry before the other.

Richard Cowie, the farmer—or “Windy-Yett” as he was oftener termed—was at the reading of the will, and left with anything but the clearest conception of the various conditions attached to the disposal of the money. One of the village gossips met Cowie on his way home, presumably putting himself in the latter’s way, so as to get the news and report to his cronies who had foregathered in the village news-exchange, the candle maker’s workshop. “Man, smith,” says the farmer, “Were you ever at the reading o’ a will?” “Na,” quoth the smith, “but it maun be fine when ye’re named in it.” “Dod, I dinna ken, I can hardly say I’ve got the leeze o’t yet; man, yon lang-nebbit auld farrant words are by-ord’nar for senselessness. It was first party this, and second party that, and aforesaid the ither, till I was clean dumfooned. Lod, I wis’ the mistress had been there; but somehow it rins in my head that the doctor has left his ain brither an’ the feck o’ his siller to oor Bell.”

The eccentric disposition of Dr. Congalton’s money gives play to many complications and absurdities that give plenty of scope for Mr. Johnston’s facile pen. The village characters are extremely well drawn. Old Isaac Kilgour, the gardener at Broomlands, the late doctor’s house, is a fine type of a reticent old Scotsman, who had a fund of humour that seemed to be buried away down in the deep recesses of his being, and yet could be reached on occasion.

The housekeeper, Mistress Izet, and her ever recurring reminiscences of her native country-side, which usually commenced with “If that wasna like a wumman in Houston Parish”—but which harangues Isaac usually choked off with a grunt that boded little for an appreciative reception of her old-time story, is an entertaining study.

Mrs. Cowie, the farmer’s wife, in her abortive attempts to inveigle George Congalton—in terms of the will, we might say—is oftentimes amusing, as often aggravating, and in the portrayal of this character we think Mr. Johnston has “scored,” for a careful reader of the story feels himself in full sympathy with the irritation of mind caused by this ignorant, head-

strong, ambitious woman. The principal characters in the story have a marked individuality of their own, and the reader is never at a loss to know who is speaking. One seems as it were, to be able to distinguish the voices quite distinctly.

Trouble came to Broomfields, the home, now, of George Congalton. Little Eva his daughter lay ill with scarlet fever. Then the superstition of these simple country folks became apparent. We read, "The mother of the maid-of-all-work had tapped at the kitchen window and spirited her daughter away in panic." And again, "Mrs. Cowie, honestly anxious about the child's condition, had come in person, and thrown gravel at the kitchen window, receiving the housekeeper's report, *with the privet hedge between them*." "Mind and tell the maister I ventured doon by to speir" she admonished. The death of little Eva gives room for a bit of fine writing. The father, George Congalton, "had seen the furious surge of battle; the thinning of solid ranks, the brilliant charge at the cannon's mouth," but "Nothing in the red front of war was ever half so unmanning to the paternal heart as the fevered restlessness of his suffering child."

Mr. Johnston brings out here in strong relief, the fine character of Hetty Hazlet, a daughter of the manse, who, some time previous had been engaged as governess to the little girl. Her devotion to the daughter, more especially at that time of severe trouble is told in touching language, but with no straining after effect.

Habbie, one of the characters in the book, had got behind with his seat rents and the minister remonstrates. This is how the story is told by one of Habbie's friends. "'They tell me you get behind wi' the seat rents.' 'Ay,' says Habbie, 'twistin's gey bad the noo'—that was a story, but the man was never a great hand at the truth. 'Ye smoke?' says the minister. 'Ou ay I smoke,' quoth Habbie. 'How much will ye smoke in the week?' 'I never took thocht; it's the wife buys the tobacco.' 'Will you smoke a couple of ounces?' says the minister, pegging at him hard. 'Like enough,' says the man. 'Weel' quoth the minister, 'most of us have to make sacrifices, suppose you knock an ounce a week off your smoking—and pay your seat rents.' 'But ye forget, Sir,' quoth Habbie quite innocently 'Ye forget I get some guid o' my smokin'.'"

Some of the expressions used by the characters in this story of village life are well worth repeating, for instance, speaking of the minister, the carrier says "I aye allowed the minister has humour, though it's no often he tak's oot the spiggot. I said the same thing to Jaik Short the ither day, but Jaik said if he had humour he must have a fifty-six on the safety valve."

But enough of quotation—the volume is most interesting throughout and shows a careful and conscientious study of country life and manners.

Over and above all that we have enumerated, Mr. Johnston is a true poet, and can strike his lyre in strong rugged measures that sound from hill to hill, or softly wander over the plaintive melodies that speak of the homely pathos of the cottage far down in the valley below. Some of the finest contributions to the collection of poems published in 1885 by the Glasgow Ballad Club were from his pen, and we are pleased to know that a second volume from the same source will appear shortly, when we may look for some fine poetic effusions by these gifted votaries of the muse. His ballad of "The Enchanted Bridle" shows strength and power. As the Chief of the Knights of Cunninghame goes to keep tryst with the Devil.

The thunder brattled wi' eerie thud,
As he rode o'er the moor o' Kame;
And when he cam' to the Baidland hill
The lichtnin' spelled his name.

When he gaed by the mountain tarn,
And through the Biglee moss,
He saw a lowe on St. Mirren's Kirk,
Abune the guid stane cross.

And when he cam' to the auld kirkyaird,
Wow! but he shook wi' dread,
For there was a ring of seven witches,
A' dancing abune the dead.

We conclude our notice with the following poem. It appeared in *Good Words* for February, 1890, and contains, we have no doubt, a personal interest to the author. We can well believe, as we read the lines, that the poet had a living model, who, as he wrote, "would prattle about his knee."

A DEAR LITTLE MAID OF TWO.

I'LL sing you a song, to a nursery tune,
Of a dear little maid of two,
Who has peachen cheeks, and rosebud lips,
And eyes of a soft sea-blue ;
With charms of a gleeful innocence,
That are ripe at the age of two.

She is not an angel, no, no, no !
And Heaven be praised for that ;
She is fairly human from top to toe,
With limbs that are daintily fat ;
And where she trots, be it high or low,
There is wealth of surprising chat.

Somebody's heart is strong and brave,
And Somebody's love is true,
By day, by night, they are amply tried,
By this little maid of two ;
But Somebody's love would never tire
Had it ten times more to do.

What reward does Somebody get ?
Dear dreamer with eyes of blue—
A kiss, a smile from the roguish pet,
A tender caress or two.
Why, each of these is a heaven of bliss,
From a sweet little maid like you !

Come, happy maid with the sea-bright eyes,
And prattle about my knee,
Then lay that soft round cheek to mine,
And laugh in innocent glee ;
That childish talk and downy touch
Give joy and strength to me.

Then grow, my sweet, as well as you may,
And be like Somebody, true ;
For high-born dames of noblest heart
Have been as tiny as you—
And in the maiden of twenty-one
May we find the maid of two.

ALEXANDER LAMONT.



Alexander Lamont.

BUFFON'S famous dogma, *Le style, c'est l'homme*, will never be seriously gainsaid, for—leaving out of sight these exceptions which simply go to substantiate the rule—the writer, be he an author of the first rank, or a dweller in the land of mediocrity, gives forth his best, his purest style when he weaves into the texture of his written words, the very fibre and sinew of his innermost being. A popular and brilliant conversationalist once observed to Lord Lytton that the poet Campbell reminded him of Goldsmith—so in-

ferior was his conversation to his fame. "I could not deny it," said Lytton, "for I had often met Campbell in general society, and his talk had disappointed me. Three days afterwards Campbell asked me to come and sup with him *tete-a-tete*. I did so. I went at ten o'clock. I stayed till dawn: and all my recollections of the most sparkling talk I have ever heard in drawing-rooms, afford nothing to equal the riotous affluence of wit, of humour, of fancy, of genius, that the great lyrist poured forth in his wondrous monologue." And what does this all mean but that Campbell felt, for the time being, he had one in his company between whom and himself there was that one touch of nature which makes the whole world kin; that feeling of fraternal sympathy which made him unbosom before his friend; in whose company he felt no shyness or diffidence, and in the light of whose responsive eye he gathered encouragement and eloquence which made the wit, the humour, the fancy, and the genius, to flow as if the rock had been smitten by the prophet's rod.

Mr. Alexander Lamont, who is one of the purest writers of the English language we have in Scotland at the present day,—though unlike Campbell in that he is at all times the most entertaining and intellectual of conversationalists,—ever attains the floodtide of poetic prose when he revels in the beauties of Nature, or dwells on the romance of old ruins, which, as she throws over these her many-coloured mantle of ivy and moss and wild flowers, Nature seems to claim for her own. With him *Le style, c'est l'homme* when he steps aside from the high-way and gets under cover of the spreading oak or elm, or sits by the fern-covered bank of the brook in some sweet sequestered glade. His pen never works at white heat when describing the poetry and romance that cling to the historic ruins of our country-side. His historical knowledge enables him to picture the condition and circumstances of these old castles, or abbeys, or keeps, when they were inhabited and alive with the men and women of a bygone age, who made the history of the now aged, crumbling pile, when it became the environment of their own illustrious and eventful lives.

Many a time have we felt the magnetism of this intense love of Nature and of old-time land-marks when walking in the country with our author. Once outside the confines of our city, and within sound of the song of the laverock and

the sight of God's own domain, the green fields, the valleys and hills, we feel that our companion requires no text, for around and above us is an everlasting sermon which inspires his eloquence and descriptive powers that make our run into the country like unto a glimpse of another world. Not so long ago, an apology would have been considered necessary when introducing a personal reference, even so slight as the foregoing, but in these days of interviews—illustrated or in plain black type—when the views of an author's study table, or of his favourite lamp, where burns the midnight oil, is considered of sufficient interest to warrant reproduction in the highest form of photogravure, we need scarcely make excuse for mentioning a matter which lies purely in the lines of our author's literary work. But the reader may prefer to judge of our author for himself. In one of his *Atalanta* articles we have the purest of coins fresh from the mint. Mr. Lamont therein discourses on "The Poetic Charm of 'Old Ruins.'"

"It matters not," he says, "where these grey ruins are found—on beetling cliff or blasted heath, in mountain solitude or on the fertile holm by shining river, within shadow of the great oaks of Sherwood, or amid the 'pastoral melancholy' of the lonely Vale of Yarrow—they have a personality peculiarly their own. Whether they be the mouldering relic of monasteries which have sheltered kings, or of abbeys where queens have obtained sanctuary, as that of Glastonbury, where Queen Guinevere, in her three years of bitter repentance, prayed for divine forgiveness, till, in heaven's sweet time, she was called away—

'To where, beyond these voices, there is peace ;'

whether they be the lichened remains of once proud towers which heard the shrill laugh of the battle trumpet at Naseby, or the grey, storm-bleached fragments of some Border reiver's strong peel-tower of the old harrying days, when many a roadside oak was a gallows tree, and when blazing homesteads often lit up the murky night-clouds that hung above Tweedside and Yarrow—those old ruins have a fascinating spell about them whose witchery has appealed to human imagination age after age, and whose tragic history has been the fertile theme of many a poet's song."

And in the closing lines of this very interesting article—one of the most charming that has ever come from his pen—Mr. Lamont seeks to explain this fascination, and to our mind he entirely succeeds. He says—

“Why is the charm around these ruins so potent? Beyond their picturesque ruggedness which appeals so strongly to our perception of colour and form, they get into the very heart of our tenderest sympathies through finer and surer channels. Their chambers, now roofless to the pitiless storm, were, ages ago, tenanted by the beautiful and the brave; their walls have been worn and rounded by time, and their battlements or archways pitted and channelled by the fierce tears of the wintry winds; on crumbling tower and broken window, every returning summer for centuries has kindled a glory of wild desert flowers, and they stand muffled in ivy, bearded with moss, and enamelled with lichens, grey and gold, all cunningly wrought through the genial witchery of the circling suns of long-forgotten summers.

“The living touch with the fateful and receding centuries, the historic associations, it may be, to which is added the pathetic significance of the moss-wreathed arches and crumbling towers, give these old ruins an aspect of exaltation which no other kind of edifice can claim. Some were old when Elizabeth was in her cradle, and the grey owls from the towers of others have heard the bugle blasts of Bosworth, or have seen the Roundhead ride slowly past,

‘Humming a surly hymn.’

“The very moss upon their walls is idealised, while the owls upon their battlements, as they look out upon the falling night, seem to muse upon the mutability of earthly things, and accept with philosophic resignation Destiny’s decrees.”

Mr. Lamont’s *chef d’œuvre* is the volume entitled “Wayside Wells,” published by Hodder & Stoughton. In the character of the “Vicar of Deepdale” he describes his parish as “a little paradise embosomed in one of our sweetest English seaboard counties.”

“The Old Lieutenant’s story” forms a division of the book, a tale which was very highly spoken of in the press.

notices that appeared at the time of publication. We quote here the description of the death of the lieutenant's first and only love, as told by himself to the vicar. She died on her bridal day.

"‘Harry, love,’ she said, ‘take my hand and stand by me till I die. I want you to take your bride to the gates of Heaven. This is our bridal night, Harry! I will not even hear the Christmas bells; but I will hear the angels’ song—the one they sang to the wandering shepherds on Bethlehem’s hills. Ah! there it is, Harry, love! Don’t you hear it? Farewell, dear—only for a little while, and then we shall be with each other always after. Kiss me, Harry!’ and my poor girl grasped my hand and kept it.

"We had to unloose that grasp after the angels of God had taken away my dark-eyed bride.

"‘. . . ‘Ah, yes,’ said he, ‘Dora is not dead to me! I seem to hear her sweet voice still, and the rustling of her garments, as if she was waiting for me in the next chamber. And so she is, so she is,’ added the old man, in a half reverie."

The following sweet-toned verses are taken from "Wayside Wells." The writer of "The Brook," we feel sure, would not have blushed had he been twitted with the authorship of these lines.

THE SONG OF THE STREAM.

I glide with soft tones o'er the moss-fretted stones,
Like melody melting away.

I steal 'neath the eaves of the whispering leaves
That smile at the first blush of day.

I quiver along to my silver-toned song,
As I dance o'er the pebbles so white;

And the fays of the stream I wake from their dream
With the sound of my elfin delight.

Through the glimmering shade of the lone forest glade
I slip, like a soft thread of gold;

And the breeze of the west passes over my breast
On its way to the far-off wold.

I bathe the bright hair of the naiads so fair,
As they steal from their flower-fringed caves,

To repose all the night on the lilies so white
That float on my moonlit waves.

Most readers of Mr. Lamont's writings, when he wields

his pen as the "Vicar of Deepdale," will agree with the late George Gilfillan, who said : "When we read some of these beautiful papers we took the author at his word, and supposed him to be an elderly English vicar, living in a romantic dale somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Lake Country, and were quite astonished to learn on inquiry, that he was a young man in the west of Scotland, hitherto guiltless of the sin of authorship, except in the shape of some very pleasing verses, and who had life all before him." This sentiment coming from such an able critic, will give the reader an idea as to the manner in which Mr. Lamont was able to carry out and maintain the illusion.

The following story came to our own knowledge some time ago :—A party of Glasgow gentlemen were discussing the relative literary merits of the English clergy as compared with the Scottish ministers. At length one of the company, who had opened the discussion and who favoured the literary attainments of the divines south of the Border, gave as a closing argument the fine literary finish and style of the writings of "Vicar of Deepdale," supposing that writer to be an Englishman !

Alexander Lamont was born at Johnstone, Renfrewshire, in the year 1843, from which place his parents removed to Glasgow, shortly after his birth. He received his primary education in Bridgeton Parish School, under the late Mr. James Lochhead. On leaving this school he was employed for some months in the office of the *Glasgow Herald*, after which he attended the High School, and while there determined to adopt the profession of a schoolmaster. With this end in view, he became a student in the Established Normal College, and afterwards attended the arts classes in the University for three sessions.

His first appointment was to a large school in Hamilton, where he remained for ten years. During the most of that time he held the post of secretary for the Quarter Lecture Association, and by his exertions brought such able lecturers to the locality as the late Rev. George Gilfillan, the Rev. David Macrae, and others.

George Gilfillan he looks upon as his "literary father," and recounts with fondness the many encouraging letters received from that brilliant critic and great and good man.

The memory of Gilfillan's friendship Mr. Lamont considers one of the greatest treasures of his life.

As far back as the year 1872, Mr. Lamont took first prize out of 700 competitors, in a competition with a story, entitled "The Broken Heart," and in 1876 "Destiny's Daughter," a romance from his pen, appeared in the columns of *The Glasgow Weekly Herald*.

He has contributed to many of our best magazines, *London Society*, *Belgravia*, *Chambers's Journal*, *The Quiver*, *Good Words*, *Sunday Magazine*, *Atalanta*, *Gentleman's Magazine*, and others. To *The Illustrated London News* he has contributed many valuable articles.

To readers of the *People's Friend* the "Vicar of Deepdale" is ever a welcome friend: as it has been repeatedly expressed to us by subscribers of that favourite journal, one always feels as if he were chatting with the "Vicar" in his snug study under the comfortable roof of the vicarage.

The "Book-lover's Enchiridion," a collection of the choicest things that have been written on the love of books, and which was published in 1888, contains an extract from "Wayside Wells." Mr. Lamont's latest contributions to literature are a series of sketches, entitled "Cameos of Covenanting Times," now running in the *People's Friend*, articles which are receiving high encomiums from all readers of taste and education. The writer brings to his subject a wealth of knowledge and a warmth of interest that few possess. The writing is strong and powerful, like the scenes depicted; and judgment is meted out with no unsparing hand, as witness the strong denunciation of the murder of Archbishop Sharpe.

A fitting close to our sketch, will be found in the perusal of the following verses. This poem originally appeared in *Chambers's Journal*, and was so much admired that it was copied into numerous newspapers and magazines at home and abroad. There is a fine human feeling about the lines that cannot fail to reach the heart of the reader. Each stanza seems to bring before us in kaleidoscopic fashion the ages of man, till the closing lines of our life-story are carved on the church-yard stone, and our memory recedes 'mid the shadows of the past, and others have stepped into the glare of noonday, with hope, like the sun, high and bright in the blue vault overhead.

THE ROUND OF LIFE.

Two children down by the shining strand,
With eyes as blue as the summer sea,
While the sinking sun fills all the land
With the glow of a golden mystery ;
Laughing aloud at the sea-mew's cry,
Gazing with joy on its snowy breast,
Till the first star looks from the evening sky,
And the amber bars stretch over the west.

A soft green dell by the breezy shore,
A sailor lad and a maiden fair ;
Hand clasped in hand, while the tale of yore
Is borne again on the listening air,
For love is young, though love be old,
And love alone the heart can fill ;
And the dear old tale that has been told
In the days gone by, is spoken still.

A trim-built house on a sheltered bay ;
A wife looking out on the glistening sea ;
A prayer for the loved one far away,
And prattling imps 'neath the old roof tree ;
A lifted latch and a radiant face
By the open door in the falling night ;
A welcome home and a warm embrace
From the love of his youth and his children bright.

An aged man in an old arm chair ;
A golden light from the western sky ;
His wife by his side, with her silvered hair,
And the open Book of God close by.
Sweet on the bay the gloaming falls,
And bright is the glow of the evening star ;
But dearer to them are the jasper walls
And the golden streets of the Land afar.

An old church-yard on a green hillside,
Two lying still in their peaceful rest ;
The fishermen's boats going out with the tide
In the fiery glow of the amber west.
Children's laughter and old men's sighs,
The night that follows the morning clear,
A rainbow bridging o'er darkened skies,
Is the round of our lives from year to year !

FRED LOCKE.



MANY a story of the fairy raid was told by our great grandmothers to their grand-children as they gathered round the cheery ingle-neuk in the long winter fore-nights, and, not so many years ago, in the rural districts of

the Scottish Lowlands especially, a firm and constant belief was held in the existence of fairies, brownies, and witches.

To-day, however, our grand-dames take little interest in fairy folk-lore, and the knowledge of "unco" things possessed by the rising generation has been acquired by a perusal of the ever-green nursery rhymes. "Their teeth have watered" over Four-and-twenty blackbirds baked in a pie. Poverty-stricken children who have had no Christmas dinner have smelt the flavour that came from the corner where sat Little Jack Horner. Their sympathies have been aroused over the sad and premature demise of Old Mother Hubbard's dog which died for lack of a bone, and their tears have given way to laughter as they turned a leaf and beheld the woeful plight of the Old Woman who lived in a shoe. Dick Whittington has entranced the heart of many a child, and, with bated breath, they have waited the *dénouement* of the story of Blue Beard.

And ho! What joy! when 'tis Christmastide, and little feet patter along the pavement by father's side, their young hearts all aglow with expectation, for are they not on the way to see the Pantomime, where the good fairy will watch over the fortunes of poor Cinderella and restore her to her lover, the Prince, when the gates of the beautiful golden palace (bless their dear, innocent hearts), will open wide, and where Cinderella and her lover will live happy all their days.

Eliza Cook gives us it in a very few lines:—

"And we'll go and see Harlequin's wonderful feats,
Changing by magic whatever he meets;
And Columbine, too, with her beautiful tripping;
And Clown, with his tumbling, and jumping, and slipping;
Cramming all things in his pocket so big,
And letting off crackers in Pantaloon's wig."

And now to say something about Mr. Fred Locke, or to be accurate, Mr. Frederick Locke Scobie; though it is by the name of "Fred Locke" that he is best known. Find a few Glaswegians snugly ensconced in their favourite howff, their hearts glowing with the recital of their youthful experiences, as the old-time pictures are revived at the bidding of one of the company, whose memory seems a storehouse for retrospective references, and in the majority of cases the talk of bygone days has reference to old Glasgow play-houses and places of amusement.

These "backward glances" have a very distinct place in the memory of Fred Locke, who, though a comparatively young man, was in the habit thirty years ago, of saving up the pence that were given him for his mid-day "piece" while at school, so that he might be able in the evening to visit his favourite Circus, then pitched on the part of the people's park which is now the happy hunting ground of the Green Orator and his fluctuating audience.

Mr. Fred Locke was born in the year 1853 on the south side of the river, not far, indeed, from the scene of his many pantomimic successes, the Royal Princess's Theatre. His father hailed from the Fair City of Perth; his mother being a native of Ayrshire. His parents were theatre-going people, and young Fred's eyes blinked at the glare of the foot-lights before he was four years of age. He received his early education at Gorbals Youths' School.

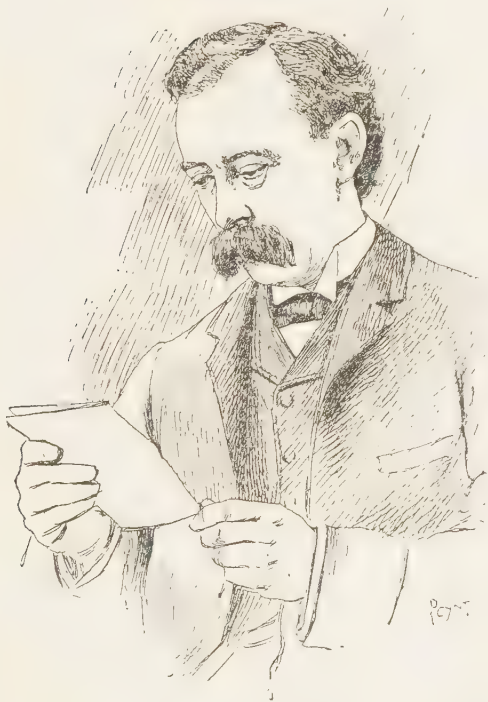
The circus, rather than the theatre, seemed to be the ruling passion with young Fred. We have been amused at the recital of these youngster escapades as given by Mr. Locke to his intimate friends.—"I was part proprietor of a show in a cellar out west, before I was twelve years of age. We had a performing cat that jumped through hoops, etc. This show however, soon came to grief, for a tenant, exasperated by the continual dirtying of the back stair, 'went' for show, showmen and audience with a broomstick, at a fashionable *matinée* at which the *élite* of the neighbourhood were present including the grocer's and baker's errand boys." Nothing daunted, however, Fred, with another boy (who, by the way, is now in the forefront of the profession) started an open-air circus on a piece of waste ground in the same locality, where they built a ring-fence with old bricks and mud. There was one drawback, they had no horses, not even a fortune-telling pony, but they had what they thought went a long way in the circus business—plenty of sawdust, and on the strength of this, the company of two, tumbled, stood on their heads and walked on their hands, sang comic and negro songs,—young Fred being a great draw in "Billy Pattison,"—much to the delight of an admiring crowd of youthful admirers.

When quite a lad Mr. Locke became intimately acquainted with a professional family, through which intimacy, he was

able to realise the dream of his youth, and get behind the scenes. The oldest member of this family was an actor, and manager of various houses in the north of England, of which theatres Mr. Locke had the run, and to this may be attributed, in large measure, the practical knowledge possessed by our friend. At this time, also, Mr. Locke was a prominent member of several amateur dramatic societies at whose entertainments he made most successful appearances, and for some years indeed his theatrical experiences were of such a practical and professional nature as to stand in good stead to one who was to write the libretti of a long series of Pantomimes.

Mr. H. C. Beryl has long been an intimate friend of Mr. Locke, and when in 1880 that gentlemen, in conjunction with Mr. T. W. Charles produced at the Royal Princess's Theatre, the pantomime "The Babes of the Wood," Mr. Locke was commissioned to write the local "hits" and now, for sixteen consecutive seasons, he has written the entire libretto for the Christmas show at our popular south-side theatre. He has, at various times, written the libretto of pantomimes for many of the principal theatres in all parts of the United Kingdom. Altogether Mr. Locke's name has figured on the Christmas bills over fifty times, and which means that out in the quiet of his country residence the long hours of winter must be shortened by the steady application of brain and pen to the production of these bright, witty lines that go to make up the fairy extravaganza. The wit must be nimble and the repartee bright and sparkling. The humour must be fresh, for no stale jokes dare be wrought into a story that is to attract its thousands, despite the rival attractions at other houses, and the songs must be of that popular "catchy" nature that at once appeal to the public ear. And happy is the pantomime song-writer who hears, in the early days of the run of the piece, the street arabs lilting the ditties that have emanated from his pen. That Mr. Locke possesses all these requirements is abundantly proven when we consider the fact already stated that for years he has produced the Christmas annual at our South-side theatre to the entire satisfaction of the managers. Mr. Locke's local allusions are extremely happy and are always written in good taste leaving no savour behind but that of healthy humour.

JAMES MEIKLE.



James Meikle

TWENTY years ago more excitement was experienced at one of the Largs lug-sail races than is to be seen now-a-days when those graceful models, those "White Wings that never grow weary" skim along the surface of the

waters in our lovely Firth during the "Clyde Fortnight." In those old lug-sail days every boat, every man and boy who manned each craft, were known so intimately in the old Ayrshire seaport town that the personal interest taken in the races, was keen and absorbing.

Among the older hands—some of them old-time yachtsmen now relegated to the region of dog-eared reminiscence and well-earned leisure spent mostly on the shorehead—there were a few characteristic natives, men whose word of warning on a doubtful night was worth heeding, and whose sage, though hamart advice on matters of everyday importance seldom found a deaf ear. All through Mr. James Meikle's tales those characters are wrought in, and there is always unmistakable life in the figures. That living models posed for each picture the reader never doubts, and this indeed forms the principal charm in all the sketches that have come from his pen.

Mr. Meikle is a thorough believer in writing only of what he knows, and, naturally, in not a few of his romances a chapter or two is devoted to these old sailing days, and the reader has but a poor gift of imagination who does not feel himself holding on to the rail of the boat as she tacks for the Townmont End on the farther Cumbræ Shore, or it may be, "ducking" his head as the smart little craft gybes and is away like a fleet steed on the homeward run.

James Meikle was born in the town of Largs, 23rd October, 1852. His father (who died in 1878,) by trade a journeyman tailor, was a man of considerable mental endowments and fine tastes. His mother, who passed away seven years ago, was a worthy, intelligent woman. He received the best education his parents could afford, first at the parish school, and latterly at the Brisbane Academy. Notwithstanding his somewhat irregular attendance at the latter school—for he had to go to work during the summer months—he was asked by the headmaster, near the end of his last year at the academy, to become a pupil-teacher. The boy, however, was desirous of learning a trade, and accordingly left school and was apprenticed to a local joiner. He was always a great reader, a keen observer of men and of things, and the fortunate possessor of a tenacious memory, so that by the

time he was ready to go out into the world to practice his handicraft, he had stored within his mind, as on the shelves of an orderly bookcase, a great amount of varied and useful knowledge that required but the opportunity to make itself apparent and of value.

For some years previous to 1875 he wrought in various shipyards in Greenock, and being warmly attached to his parents, he wrote home long letters full of graphic descriptions of what he saw and heard from day to day in that busy seaport, and it was from those letters, crude and imperfect though they were, that his father—a firm believer in the power of the press, and a great admirer of modern journalism—was enabled to detect the lad's gifts, and he never ceased to point out to him the wisdom of cultivating them with a view to becoming a journalist some day. One of the keenest regrets of Mr. Meikle's life is that his father did not live to see him do more than set out on his new career.

Returning to Largs in 1875, Mr. Meikle was asked to assist a friend in conducting a local newspaper, and the first issue of that journal contained a very readable article from his pen, on Yachting ; an article containing not a little evidence of much familiarity with a subject on which he is now a recognised authority. To this same paper he contributed, among other sketches, a series of papers on the "Largs of Langsyne," so full of invaluable information on the ecclesiastical, social, and antiquarian history of the place that his friends are hopeful that he will one day complete his work of love for his native town by issuing them in a collected form.

In 1876, Mr. Meikle made his first trial as a professional journalist by contributing paragraphs to the *Greenock Advertiser*, and at the same time he showed considerable ability as a descriptive writer in the work which he put into a local guide-book.

During the summer of 1877, Mr. Andrew Thomson, then yachting editor of *Land and Water*, was on a visit to Largs, and on witnessing one of the enthusiastic lug-sail races, expressed a desire to get some notes of it for his paper. Mr. Meikle was asked to do the work, and this was the commencement of a very pleasant connection for both

parties. In the beginning of 1882 he was appointed local correspondent for the *North British Daily Mail*. During the summer of that year he at times did the yachting reports for Mr. G. L. Watson, the famous yacht designer, and who was at that time yachting correspondent for the *Mail*. In the following year, 1883, Mr. Watson retired from the position, and Mr. Meikle was appointed in his stead. Since then he has done the bulk of the *Mail's* yachting work, with satisfaction to his employers and credit to himself. For this work he is peculiarly well fitted. To quote the words of an intimate friend of his, to whom we are indebted for the particulars of his life: "He is brimful of the traditions of his native parish, which is the most enthusiastic yachting centre in Scotland, and which has produced so many yachting celebrities. He has a quick eye for catching the points of a race, a ready, graphic pen, and he loves yachting for its own sake."

Mr. Meikle wrote a series of short stories, most of which appeared in *The Daily Mail* during 1883 and 1884. These tales were favourably received both by the press and the public. Early in 1885, a novelette from his pen, entitled "A Costly Experiment," appeared in *The Glasgow Weekly Mail*. In the summer of that year, his popular tale, "The Lintie," ran in the columns of the same paper. "Charlie Gordon's Trust," another serial, followed, and in October, 1886, in the same journal, the opening chapters appeared of the novel entitled "The Force of Circumstances," which is in many respects the best story he has given to the public.

"Notable Clyde Yachts," a series of articles from his pen, appeared in *The Daily Mail* in 1885-87, and attracted public attention. These papers formed the back-bone of the literary portion of "Famous Clyde Yachts," a work that must have cost Mr. Meikle a vast amount of labour; and we have been told that while engaged on it he thought nothing of travelling many miles, writing dozens of letters, and wading through columns of reports, to verify a single item. It is a most handsome volume—in fact, it might be termed a yachting encyclopedia. The illustrations in the book were from water colour drawings by Mr. Henry Shields, and met with great admiration.

A satisfactory and encouraging experience came Mr. Meikle's way during the summer of 1887. The proprietors of *The Boston Herald*, having heard of his work in connection with *The Mail*, appointed him as their Scottish yachting correspondent. His first two or three articles were so satisfactory that the stipulated remuneration was considerably increased, and, with true Yankee "go," the Boston folks gave him *carte blanche* to write on whatever he thought would be interesting to their readers. He is also the Clyde correspondent of *The Yachtsman*, a first-class London journal, devoted to yachting alone, and has been so since the first part was issued.

Since he wrote his "Famous Clyde Yachts" sketches he has written short but comprehensive notes for a handsome book of Clyde Yachting Pictures, reproduced in magnificent style by Messrs. Maclure & Macdonald of this city, from the best of Mr. W. J. Finlayson's valuable collection of photographs of Clyde yachts taken by that gentleman during the last ten years.

Mr Meikle's popular tale, "The Lintie," as already stated, appeared first in serial form in the *Weekly Mail*. It was most deservedly popular, chiefly because all the characters seemed so true to life, though it may be admitted that "The Lintie" himself is at times rather precocious. The others may be taken, however, as true and accurate pictures of everyday characters in a seaport town. The high moral tone and the manly spirit in which the romance is wrought out is in itself enough to commend it to the reader. The popularity which "The Lintie" won as a serial induced the author to publish it in book form, and the success it has met with amply justified the course. This fact may also be taken as a testimony to the merit of the work, for many stories that succeed as serials are conspicuous failures in book form. In one of the criticisms of the book the remark was made that the characters were so well drawn, so true to life, that on paying a visit to the old seaport town of Largs one might very reasonably expect to meet by the shore, prototypes of the various individuals that figure in his romance. As a matter of fact several of the young novelist's bowling and waterside friends were sketched from life and wrought into the tale, and nothing

pleased him more in connection with it than the fact that one at least of those so sketched turned out as warm an admirer as "The Lintie" had.

The story takes its title from a boy called William Grahame, but who is oftener nicknamed "The Lintie," from his blithe, cheerful, active habits, and passionate love of birds. "The Lintie" is a born fancier of all kinds of tame animals. Listen to him as he speaks to one of his hens that had forsaken her nest before the chickens were hatched, the while he is trying to free the tiny morsels from their shells. "Come noo, auld leddy, jist ca' canny, an' we'll get on faur better. Ay, it's to you I'm speaking, an' ye needna' cluck, cluck, an' chick, chick onything aboot it, jist as if you had done your duty, an' sat on the eggs as firmly as a stain sticks to a new jacket. If you had sat yesterday like ony sensible hen there wouldna' hae been ony o' this kind o' business needed." Then the boy calls to his mother, who is holding the young birds as he releases them from the shells. "Mother, you're squeezing that bird; do you no' hear't yelping?" "I'm naething o' the kind, you impident brat," hastily replied the mother; "an' what's mair an' better, if you're no pleased at what I'm daen' I'll throw you an' nest an' birds an' a' oot at the door! I never get my hoose kept like ony ither body's wi' you an' your clamjamfry o' rabbits, an' dugs, an' birds, an' bantens." But Mrs. Grahame was a real mother, and the boy left home for his work that morning comforted with the assurance that, by giving the young birds "whiles a wee drap milk oot o' her mooth, an' keepin' the awfu' weak anes in her breist," she would do all she could to keep them alive, and, as the "Lintie" said, "Onything that'll no live wi' that deserves to dee."

Another fine character in the book is "Alec Taylor," the guide, philosopher, and friend of Willie Grahame, and a worthy model he is for any boy. Alec is engaged to a sweet, winsome lassie, a servant in one of the villas in Largs, and through this acquaintanceship he is able to clear up the misunderstanding that had arisen between Helen Maitland and George Cameron—the hero and heroine of the novel. An interesting chapter in the book is that describing a bowling match on the Allan Park Green

between representative rinks belonging to Glasgow and Largs for "a bag o' tatties—the winners to gie them to the puir." The game depicted in the story, was modelled on one which really took place, and it only requires a bowler to read the graphic description, and he will imagine the turf under his feet and instinctively feel for the chalk to mark the last "toucher." While the game proceeds we are introduced to a worthy, named Jock Jones, the "Sober Ane," whose pet saying is, "Never send a boy a man's erran' nor ring pigs in frosty weather." The "Sober Ane" was drawn from life, Mr. Meikle being very friendly with the original, as the careful reader may perceive from the loving way in which he has portrayed him.

Mr. Meikle's graphic portrayal of the bowling match brings the game so clearly before our mental vision, that we here quote the description of the final "end."

"There is no better or more wholesome feature connected with our great summer and winter games, and one that is more likely to preserve them from blackguardism and wrong-doing, than the pleasant fact that men will, aye, and do, play them eagerly and fondly for a meal of potatoes and herrings, snaps and ale, a new hat, or some such trifling fancy—losers treat the winners—as those who make a profession of some other games do for fortunes in stakes and bets. Long may it be so!

The game stood 20-17 in favour of the city players, but, at the point quoted, Largs lay 4 shots, so that the Glasgow skip had to alter the face of things or get defeated. "Murdoch (Glasgow skip) did not play this time with the same fierce energy, but just strongly enough to remove the good side counter which Martin had laid, and cause his own bowl to lie in its place. Worse, at least for Largs, it rolled in a very little towards the jack, till there was no possibility of Steel (Largs skip) getting at it but by coming through the awkward port he himself had made."

"'There,' said Murdoch, as his bowl gave the last roll, —taking away one of the Largs counters—'that'll mak' anither heid necessary, an' gie us one more chance.'

"Steel stood patiently, bowl in hand, on the mat, while Martin and Lennox carefully weighed up all the pros and cons and ifs and ands of the case, and nearly fell out doing

so. 'See,' Steel said, 'I'll come up that port, swap bools wi' Murdoch's, an' that'll aither mak' a spune or spile a horn.'

"'It's a' that's for't, I doot, Hughie. I've seen the day when taking a shot through a wee'r and gleed'r port than that wouldna hae fash't you sair.'

"'I think it'll no fash me muckle the nicht yet.'

"'Lord, Steel, if you do't I'll tell Gladstone to make you a baronet the verra first time he's in power,' Mr. Lennox said.

"'Aye do, man, an' don't forget to tell him as weel to gie me a guid big pension to keep up the dignity o' my new sphere,' Steel said, with a slightly ironical laugh. 'Noo, stan' oot frae aboot the jack an gie's a chance. There you are.'

"As he threw the bowl from him he leapt from the mat in a style many a man only half his age might well envy. Up the green the bowl ran, and, as if imbued with some kind of supple sinuous life, it crept through the dreaded port up to Glasgow bowl, quietly rolled it aside, and settled down the game winning shot."

Another original character is "Jimmie Langline," a fisherman by necessity, a homely, kindly philosopher by nature, and a type of character Largs "shore heid" has never been altogether without.

Personally James Meikle is a most estimable man. To know him is to admire him. His kindly, generous nature goes out in warm sympathy to all "brither scribblers." In private life he is kind and considerate to all about him, fond of home, proud of Largs, and much attached to the simple, wholesome pleasures and pastimes which it affords; moreover, while singularly Catholic in his tastes, he is a steady, thrifty, earnest man. Though still a comparatively young man, he has won a good position in journalism, and those who know him best believe that he will do still better work, and win higher honours.

A new serial from Mr. Meikle's pen "The Laird of Gogoside: a Tale of Clyde Smugglers," is announced to commence shortly in the columns of the *Glasgow Weekly Mail*.

TOM MEWAN, R.S.W.



Tom. Mewan

“THE truth that Burns wrote Lhermitte pictures for us,” are the words with which Mr. Robert Walker closes his interesting sketch of the famous French artist in that interesting volume, “Toilers in Art.” The same ex-

pression may be fitly applied to the subject of this article. Twenty-five years ago, then in the first blush of his manhood, Mr. M'Ewan found himself the possessor of boons that had not often been thrown his way in the former years of his busy, hard-working life. He found himself with money in his pocket, and the freedom to spend a week of well-earned leisure in that—to a youth of artistic bent—priceless isle of Arran, unlimited storehouse of sketching ground. Prior to this time, his artistic inclinations and aspirations had asserted themselves in no uncertain way, and every spare hour had been assiduously spent in the pursuit of his strong and unwavering determination to become a painter on canvas. It was not till this time, however, that young Tom M'Ewan found that special phase of artistic study, which, in after years, was to bring fame to his name. It was not found in the impressive solitude of the moor, the glassy surface of the loch, the overpowering mountains,—with that feeling of awe which they inspire, that is to be found in a Milne Donald. Nor was it by the shore, with the sea sending its billowy crest against the stern, unbending rocks, with the fishermen out in their boat, fighting against fearful odds for very life, as pictured to-day in the work of Colin Hunter and others, but in the quaint, simple interiors did young M'Ewan find his true inspiration. He looks in at the open door, and the eye of the poet-painter sees at a glance the lights and shadows that gather round the lives of those humble fisher-folk. He sees an old woman, worn with years, frail in body and bent in form. She is spinning the yarn that is to provide her daily bread, and as the dying light from the westering sun illumines her careworn features, he sees on the lines that furrow her brow the record of days that were spent—

“Oft in sorrow, oft in woe.”

Mr. M'Ewan, being endowed with the dual talents that are involved in the terms poet and painter, accentuates our interest in, and understanding of, the scene portrayed on the canvas by the more extended interpretation of his thoughts, which he conveys in his verse. We cannot better illustrate the point, than by quoting these fine verses which lend a fuller meaning to his fine picture, “Left Alone”—a picture

which at a single glance appeals to the finer feelings of the onlooker, be he possessed of a heart at all. We can only echo the regret expressed by a mutual friend that we cannot at the same time, reproduce the picture they so finely elucidate.

LEFT ALONE.

'Tis just like a belt of the moorland,
That borders the side of the sea,
With patches of corn and potatoes,
With stretches of ryegrass and lea,
With patches of broom and of bramble,
Of hawthorn and hazel-tree.

The quaintest and queerest old houses
All lie within sound of the shore,
Their bracken-thatched roofs in the sunlight
With wild flowers and grasses grown o'er,
With ivy and lichen-grown gables,
And crooked each window and door.

The quaintest and queerest old houses,
Rough-raftered, and mystic within,
Where the fire glimmers low on the hearth,
And light through the smoke struggles in,
One sits, with her life-laden visage,
Alone, but to dream and to spin.

Alone, in that mystical region,
Once cheery with prattle and song,
Once bright with the sweetness of faces,
Once rich with the healthy and strong,
Alone at her wheel in that dreamland
She spinneth the weary day long.

Whirr ! goes the wheel in its motion,
And restless the past in her brain—
The joys and the loves and the sadness,
And the shafts of grief and of pain—
That is spun with the thread, a spinning
Life's journeyings over again.

The sun flickers in at the window
And dances bright over the floor,
The bee with the breath of the moorland
Comes in at the open door ;
She sings to the dance of her children,
Till the bobbin with thread runs o'er.

Round her house by the ivy gable
She can see the boats in the bay—
Fishermen's boats with their bark'd-brown sails
Wind-full, sail gaily away.

Then a blinding mist comes o'er her eyes,
With sad thoughts of another day.

Whirr ! goes the wheel in its motion,
And on with the thread as it runs,
A bark, wind-tossed on an angry sea,
With a father and three brave sons,
On, till the flight of her vision dies
And her soul in a frenzy burns.

These quaintest and queerest old houses.
With wild flowers and grasses grown o'er,
Are havens of hardy fishermen
Who live on the western shore.
Fishermen's crofts, with their quaint old homes,
That were built in the days of yore.

And she who sits wearily spinning
Her thoughts of the past with the thread,
Suffers the lot that fishermen's wives
And that fishermen's mothers dread,
Left alone, in a wearisome world,
But to work for her daily bread.

It is characteristic of Scotsmen that they rarely give voice to the tender side of their nature. Even when, mayhap, they meet a brither-man o'er whom the bitter clouds of affliction or of misfortune may have gathered, the deep sympathy that wells up in their heart oft-times only finds expression in that firm pressure of the hand, so simple, and yet so brimful of meaning and of eloquence. With pen in hand, however, the heart is oftener allowed to speak, and hence the pathos with which much of the verse of our Scottish bards is surcharged.

Mr. M'Ewan is a case in point. To have the pleasure of his company for an hour, and to listen as he draws from his rich fund of anecdote and story, or lilts some auld Scottish ballad, is to find only part indication of the warmth of feeling and tenderest sympathy that lie hid beneath that burly exterior.

For evidence of these deeper feelings we must turn to his easel, where, it may be, the canvas is illumined by the face of an old mother of Israel as she ponders over the Book of books, the only abiding mainstay of her declining years, and, as we ask the title of the picture, another evidence of the poet is forthcoming in the apt appellation—"Among the Prophets," or, for further proof, we may read his poetry, a fine example of which we have already given.

Tom M'Ewan's life, up till he was twenty-one years of age, was only lit up by fitful gleams of sunshine. He was born at Busby in the year 1846. When four years old he lost his mother, and when little more than a child—he was eight at the time—he was sent up to the calico print-works and commenced work as a “tearer,” at which occupation he remained till he was fourteen.

His father knew Horatio M'Culloch and used to tell his boys about the great painter. James Docharty was a visitor at their home, and, perchance, these two great men were the means of firing the nebulous artistic talents which lay hid in the tiny lad who ran about the floor.

In 1859 the family moved to Glasgow, and the following year Tom was apprenticed to the pattern designing. Then his evenings were his own—formerly he had to work three nights each week till ten o'clock—but with his evenings free he was at liberty to attend to his own education, both mentally and artistically. By this time the throbbing of artistic aspirations had made themselves apparent in the fact that, having made the discovery that there was a Stirling Library, and found the way to that place, the books he read had reference mostly to art and artists.

In 1861 the Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts was opened for the first time, and then young Tom had his earliest opportunities of viewing works of art, and of getting inspiration, insight, and encouragement. With the inspiration came the desire to try his 'prentice han', and with the will he found a way to pursue his artistic bent.

As is often the case with a man of metal and stamina, difficulties but make him set his teeth the keener; as before the freshening gale we plant our feet the firmer, determined to pursue our way undaunted. How Mr. M'Ewan and his young friends overcame their difficulties would make quite a romantic story.

In 1863 he attended the School of Design, and his perseverance and courage gained him a local medal and a certificate as a teacher. He was the winner of a national medallion for design. He attended the School of Art, and his attendance there was all the more gratifying from the fact that his fees were paid from the results of his own labours apart from his daily occupation. Under Mr. Greenlees of the School

of Art, Mr. M'Ewan made studies from the antique in chalk and pencil. He also gained a knowledge of anatomy.

Mr. M'Ewan is one of the original members, as he is one of the moving spirits connected with the Glasgow Art Club. He is also an esteemed and worthy member of our Glasgow Ballad Club, which, with an easy transition, brings us back to a further consideration of his poetry.

In Mr. M'Ewan's lines entitled "The Crow's Wedding" we have fine examples of the pawky humour of the poet as well as convincing evidence of his originality in conception and his gift of word-painting.

THE CROW'S WEDDING.

Twa crows sat
On a high tree tap,
Oh bricht grew the gowd on the whin ;
An' milk-white an' high
Sailed the clouds through the sky—
The bonnie blue sky—
That was pure as the angels frae sin.

Twa crows sat
On a high tree tap,
An' crowsflowers were seen in the dell ;
An' through the grey wuds
Were the downy saugh buds
In silvery cluds,
An' the burnie crooned songs 'bout itsel'.

Twa crows sat
On a high tree tap,
While clear rang the Sabbath morn bells !
The sweet soun's were borne
On the wings o' the morn—
That early March morn—
That pure love's happy union foretells.

Twa crows sat
On a high tree tap,
An' the merle sang sweet frae the thorn ;
Oh, sae sweetly he sang,
While the Sabbath bells rang—
Sae clear, clear and lang.
Quo' the caw, "Isna this a blythe morn?"

Twa crows sat
On a high tree tap,
An' didna weel ken what to say ;
Love maks ane look fule,
Wae, tongue tackit, an' dule—

Like bairns at the schule—
When first woke to love's tremblin' lay.

Twa craws sat
On a high tree tap,
Oh, ken ye what they did dae?
They kissed ane anither,
An' vowed they would ever
Be happy thegither,
An' cuddle an' coo a' the day.

Twa craws sat
On a high tree tap,
Quo' he, "Leddy, this winna dae:
We maun big us a nest,
Where at e'en you can rest—
A cozie, warm nest—
That will shield a' the bairns that we hae."

Twa craws sat
On a high tree tap,
Nae langer that sweet Sabbath day,
But gaed fleein' awa,
Wi' a cheery "caw caw,"
A blyther "caw, caw,"
Oh, wha was mair happy than they.

For a sweet love lilt, what prettier lines can we quote than
Mr. M'Ewan's—

BY KITTOCH.

THERE'S a holm where the Kittoch rins
Through a flower-spangled meadow o' green,
Sairly tired wi' the loupin' o' linns,
An' weary wi' mill-wheels, I ween—
Where the ash an' the birk grow bonnie.

There's a cot by that meadow green,
Where the youngest o' sweet lasses three
Has sic love in her hazel een,
That I weary for ever to be
Where the ash an' the birk grow bonnie.

Where my fancy for ever taks flicht,
While I toil 'mid the grey city's din,
To that valley that shimmers in licht
Wi' the sun-burnished gowd o' the whin—
Where the ash and the birk grow bonnie.

An' the licht o' the love that beams
Frae that lassie that's youngest o' three,
Maks me long day an' nicht in my dreams
'Mang the sweets o' that valley to be
Where the ash an' the birk grow bonnie.

We close this sketch of our Glasgow Poet-Artist with one other quotation in the love strain, that shews Mr. M'Ewan in by no means his worst light as a gifted son of the muse.

THE RUSTIC YETT.

THERE's a rustic yett on yon green hillside,
An O, sae happy were I,
To be nichtly there i' the gloamin' hour
As Mary ca's hame the kye ;
To open the yett to my love, my pet,
With never a mortal nigh,
An' a wish this lane had never an en'
When Mary ca's hame the kye.

There's a rustic yett on yon green hillside,
I see wherever I go
With its polished sheen o' the siller birk
An' roots o' the gnarled sloe ;
To open that yett to my love, my pet,
When the stars blink i' the sky
An' the shadows creep doon the dewy lane
As Mary ca's hame the kye.

There are sweet soun's at e'en by yon burnside,
Such whisperings sweet and low ;
When the mavis has sung his parting sang
To the evening's radiant glow,
To open the yett to my love, my pet,
With never a mortal nigh,
An' whisper such tales o' passionate love,
As Mary ca's hame the kye.

Sweet is the breath o' the heath frae the muir
An' sweet frae the new-mown hay,
Frae the birk, the brier, and the meadow-queen,
At close o' a simmer day.
To open the yett to my love, my pet,
When the stars blink i' the sky,
An' the lane wears a mystic dewy veil,
As Mary ca's hame the kye.

Oh ! I toil 'mid the city's deevnin' din,
'Mid its sad an' sunless grey,
But, I toil, with a hope, the time may come
That fortune will guide my way,—
To open that yett to my love, my pet,
Where we vow'd by a' on high,
To wander from there thro' the lane o' life
Wi' the love we followed the kye.

DONALD MACLEOD.



WITH the average business man of to-day, we fear, the love of nature is almost a dead letter. If he desires to travel to the coast or country, the quickest is the cheapest route for him. If for an extra shilling he may get thirty minutes longer at his desk, he considers it good value. Arrived at his destination, his first duty, after seeing to his

creature comforts—for they must be attended to—is to find out when the evening newspapers arrive, so that he may see “what’s doing,” and on Monday morning when the steamer reaches the pier, where stands the train to carry him to the city, the rush of passengers as they disembark, would lead a stranger to suppose that these men had gone off on Saturday leaving their office safe open, and the outer door insecure. It is a pleasure, then, to come in contact with a man who has spent years behind the counter, and who, at the same time, has given his leisure to the cultivation of his mind, until he has come to be recognised as an authority on the literature of his country, and more especially the history and songs of his native district.

We have at this moment, before our mental vision a worthy Scotsman—well-known as an authority on Gallovidian literature, and as the publisher of many handsome volumes compiled by *litterateurs* of that country side—who has been for years a successful merchant in his own town, and a casual visitor to his shop would little suspect that in the back room, are hundreds of volumes, many of them of great value, and that the proprietor of the business is the book-lover that he is. And now we have pleasure in introducing to the reader a gentleman of like tastes, well known in Dunbarton.

To many of the sons of the rock which stands sentinel in our lovely firth, Mr. Donald Macleod may only be known as a familiar figure in the social, commercial, and municipal life of the ancient burgh ; but, far beyond the borders of the old town, he is known as the chronicler of the sweet warblings of the singers of the Lennox ; the historian of its notable families and people ; “The old Mortality” of its God’s acres, for if he has not renewed the writings on the stones, he has, at least, preserved for all time the most notable of its epitaphs, and recorded the main facts in the lives of men, who now lie in the shadows, and await the coming morn.

For forty years Mr. Macleod conducted business successfully in Dunbarton, and the majority of his books were written, in great part at least, in the intervals of business ; the room behind his shop becoming his study.

Mr. Macleod is the oldest son of the late John Macleod, hatter, there, who was a member of a Row family. Donald

was born at Edinburgh on the fourth day of October, 1826, that never to be forgotten year of the short corn.

In 1830 the family removed to Dunbarton where the father commenced business. The son received his education principally in the Academy of that town, under the rectorship of the late Gilbert Turner, to whose worth and ability Mr. Macleod makes repeated and loving references.

In 1841 he was apprenticed to his father, but three years later—trade being in a very backward state at that time—he, with his parents' consent, sought for an opening elsewhere. He found a situation for a short time in Kilmarnock. After that he wrought for several years in Glasgow where his term of apprenticeship was completed, and in the year 1850, joined his father's firm in Dunbarton—trade in that town having received a decided impetus on the marked and pronounced development of shipbuilding on the shores of the Leven.

With the *literati* of Dunbartonshire for these forty years he has had a very close and personal acquaintance; alas that so few now remain of these talented men who lent a distinctive tone to the old rock-guarded town.

As a boy he was familiar with the late Bailie Mitchell, a man of strong literary bent, whose presence brought an atmosphere of geniality, good humour, and wit, the latter of which is preserved in his characteristically-worded minutes of the Dunbarton Midge and Salmon Clubs, and of the King Coul Convivial Club of Glasgow.

Mr. Macleod was intimately acquainted with the late William Shand Daniel, sheriff-clerk depute of that county, the author of many fine poetical effusions of a spirited nature. With the late Joseph Irving, author of the "History of Dunbartonshire," "Annals of our Time," etc., Mr. Macleod was for many years on the most intimate terms: indeed our author looks upon Joseph Irving, in great measure, as his literary father, whose suggestions in his youthful days shewed him many hitherto unknown paths in the world of books, and whose sweet companionship along the way of life lent brighter hues to the all too dull and monotonous routine of the daily round of existence.

Mr. Macleod, though of strong literary tastes, has ever taken a healthy interest in the social clubs of his town. He



ARCHIBALD MACMILLAN.



FEW readers of *Blackwood's Magazine*, in the early years of this century, opined that the varied and clever contributions which appeared over the signature of the Greek letter Δ (Delta), were the product of hours snatched from the busy life of a young medical practitioner in a

country district, and when "The Autobiography of Mansie Waugh" commenced in the pages of that magazine in 1824, so popular did the pawky, simple-minded humour of the tailor of Dalkeith become, that country reading clubs waited impatiently for their copy of *Blackwood* till they should have "Mansie's" letter read aloud, 'mid roars of laughter.

And, when at length the veil was drawn aside, astonishment and wonder possessed the minds of all, as the personality of young Dr. David Macbeth Moir, of Musselburgh, was discovered behind the mask of the honest knight of the needle.

If "Mansie Waugh" was popular in his day—a name to conjure with, a generation later, was that of "Tammis Bodkin." At a complimentary dinner given to Mr. W. D. Latto—the talented editor of *The People's Journal*, and the writer of the inimitable letters by "Tammis Bodkin o' Buttonhole"—a communication was read from one of the oldest members on the staff in which he stated that, as he travelled over the North of Scotland, at the commencement of Mr. (now Sir John) Leng's weekly newspaper, appointing agents and correspondents, "many a better half,—after we had failed to persuade her lord and master that the *Journal* agency would succeed in his hands,—made him consent to try it by reminding him that this was the paper in which the 'funny bits' were written by 'Tammis Bodkin.'"

If by the shores of the Firth of Forth lived one whose name will ever be a household word wherever the braid Scottish tongue is known and revered, and if the natives of Tayside can claim as one of themselves the genial and pawky 'Tammis,' we of the West coast are proud to claim as a Clydeside writer, born and bred, the douce elder, colonel, provost, etc., all bound up in the personality of "Jeems Kaye," the worthy coal merchant of Strathbungo.

Many have been the "guesses" at discovering the wielder of the pen that transcribed the humorous and entertaining letters which presumed to emanate from "The Coal Ree."

For many years a well-known music-seller of Glasgow, now deceased, was accredited with the honour, and not long ago the writer of an article giving a retrospective glance at the history of Scotch comic papers, dead and alive, put "Jeems's" cap on a well-known cleric of the city, but

the editor of the magazine where the paper appeared was better posted up than his contributor, and the error was corrected before appearing in print.

It has therefore been an open secret for some time now that Mr. Archibald Macmillan is the author of the "Jeems Kaye Papers," but the pleasure has been reserved for ourselves of giving some biographical particulars, and a view of the sonsie well-faured face of the worthy coal merchant. It is not exactly in accordance with the portrait that fronts his popular books. No! Yon portrait of the douce, bien provost o' Stra'bungo is but the mask that Mr. Macmillan donned when he sat down by the fireside at the evening's close to indite a letter to his friend *The Bailie*.

Mr. Macmillan, as his writings show, is geniality and good humour personified. He was born in Greenock in 1843, his father being a prosperous merchant of that town. By his fourteenth year his parents were both dead, and he then came to Glasgow to finish his education. Getting into a situation as a clerk, he rose steadily step by step till now he conducts a large business on his own account as a commission agent. He married in his twenty-fifth year, and for some time has resided with his wife and family at a favourite Ayrshire coast town, travelling sixty miles daily to and from business.

In a large company our genial friend keeps in the background, but let him foregather with a friend for a twa-handed crack, or get ensconsed among a few old cronies, and he can keep the company lively with spontaneous jocularities, or in retailing humorous incidents that may have come under his observant eye.

He has imbibed his love for the vernacular at the purest of streams, for his favourite author is the "Ettrick Shepherd," and the doric classics of "Mansie Waugh" and "Tammas Bodkin" have many a time been his companions in his most delightful hours.

While a boy, many of his holidays were spent at Kilmaccolm, where his keenest enjoyment was to be found in listening to the quaint, old-fashioned talk of the natives.

His articles are not the laboured efforts of serious study, but rather the natural outflow, in leisure moments, of one who is a keen observer of human nature, and who can

give a decidedly humorous turn to his every saying. He *can* write when asked to do so, but, as with most writers, prefers to let his mind lie fallow till an idea strikes him, which may even then be only allowed to "simmer" for days till definite mental shape is given to the thought, and then recourse is had to pen and ink. He has contributed to numerous papers under various names. To *Seestu*, a short-lived Paisley comic paper; *Pat*, a Dublin humorous publication; a series of "Sketches in Shetland," to the *Paisley Herald*; a weekly column of gossip to the *Ardrossan Herald*, as well as to the *Buteman*, and various articles to the *People's Friend*.

It is mainly, however, as the author of the "Jeems Kaye Papers" that Mr. Macmillan's reputation as a writer exists. His first letter to the *Bailie* was on the subject of "The Caars," and, like many of the succeeding articles, dealt in a humorous way with matters that were exercising the public mind.

We can readily understand how this first article from the new contributor should tickle the fancy of the editor. The opening sentences, which we quote, show at once the spontaneity and natural, easy flow of the author's humour.

"Although, Bailie, I read the papers weel, I'm no' gi'en tae writin' letters muckle tae them. No but I hae the inclination gae often; but oor Betty says I haena the gift. Weel, nae doot a gift's needed, although some o' the correspondents hae unco little gift indeed. Hooever, there's ae subject I'm sair bothered wi' and I will write for ance. Betty, puir woman, has had an unco sair hoast this twa days, and she's awa tae bed and sleeping like a new-born babe, after three gless o' toddy.

"My grievance is the tramway cars—thae elephant boxes, as I've seen them caa'd, that flee alang oor streets, scattering the puir coal carters like chaff afore the win', and knocking doon and laming decent folk, no' tae speak o' the bits o' bairns they hae murdered."

The author of the paper did not put any name to his MS., and the editor added the *non de plume* of "Jeems Kaye," being the name of an old Glasgow worthy, a printer to trade.

For four or five years only three of Mr. Macmillan's most intimate friends knew that he was the author of these papers, and it was a good many years before even the editor of the

paper knew who his valuable contributor was, or had seen him in the flesh. It is not the first time Mr. Macmillan has sat in a company where the personality of "Jeems" was keenly discussed, and different persons accredited with the honour. Our friend cannot say why he fixed on a coal-ree as the base of operations. His choice of Strathbungo is accounted for in this way. The first day he was in Glasgow—he was but a boy then—he met a lad who was going a message to "Stra'bungo," as he called it. Archibald thought it a very odd name, and it stuck to his memory, and recurred to him while he wrote his epistles. Besides, for many years he resided in Pollokshields, and the proximity of the one place to the other made the transition of thought and action natural.

Mr. Macmillan, as has been already indicated, handles the doric with a graphic and ready pen.

"Jeems Kaye," the worthy coal merchant, is an admirable type of a bien, honest tradesman of the middle class, "wha hadna muckle siller tae brag o', but yet had aye a pickle bawbees laid by for a rainy day."

The difficulty in quoting the sayings of "Jeems" is in knowing where to stop, for there's no dearth of humorous tit-bits.

Speaking of the Royal Volunteer Review of 1881, he says, "The kin' o' heid officers, sick as generals and sergeants, flew aboot on horses wi' feathers in their hats," and then finishes a fine descriptive sentence by exclaiming, "Man, the battle o' Waterloo could hae been naething tae't, except, of course, we had nae rale fechtin'."

It may be interesting to note here in passing that Mr. Macmillan was among the first to join the Volunteer force, being a member of the 17th (Accountants) Company, which company afterwards became a part of the 1st Lanark Rifles.

While "Jeems" and his "municipal colleagues"—including his friend Mr. Pinkerton, of wooden leg fame—visited the Queen, he tells how his friend could not kneel properly owing to the false limb being unwieldy.

"Here the door opened, and in walked the Queen—jist an ornar-looking body, wi' nae croon on her heid, or sceptre in her haun. Doon we a' fell on oor knees—a' except Mr. Pinkerton; as his wudden leg wadna bend, he lent on a sofa,

an' spreading oot his leg behin' him, he bent the ither ane an' held on by the back o' a chair. Indeed he had as much difficulty in getting intae position as ane o' yon circus horses when it's kneeling doon tae fire aff a cannon.

"'Rheumatism?' says the Queen.

"'Wudden leg, men,' says I, 'run ower by a tramway caar; but he got big damages, so he's naething tae compleen aboot. Alloo me tae introduce you—Mr. Pinkerton—oor Senior Bailie; Queen Victoria, Defender of the Faith, Dei Gratia, etc., etc., as it says on the back o' the hauf-croons.'"

"Jeems" can at times have a good "fling" at current topics; and he does it in the most innocent way in the world.

A sail in one of our harbour steamers is described thus: "On we careered, cleaving the blue waves asunder, an' sending up tae the heavens an incense that made mony a a strong man tremble."

"Jeems" has the happy knack, of which he has given evidence more than once, of saying the correct thing at the right time and place. His articles on the Arabi campaign appeared at the moment when the public excitement was at its height. His humorous article on the Edinburgh Review of 1881 appeared a day before the event, and the consequence was that it sold in great numbers and caused intense amusement, in fact, it was better than the reality, for "Jeems" said it was a beautiful day while those of us who were there know the reverse.

The worthy Colonel of the Stra'bungo Light Horse, however, wrote of weather conditions as he desired to see them, and when his book appeared, the clerk of the weather got full credit for the dirty trick served out that day to the citizen soldiers o' puir auld Scotland.

One of the beauties of Dr. Moir's creation was the simplicity of the honest Dalkeith tailor, leading him to make many ludicrous mistakes, as an instance, "Mansie Waugh's first and last play."

"Jeems Kaye" is the type of a simple-minded old Scotchman whose contact now and again with city life has sharpened his wits a bit, and yet, at times, he falls into such a blunder as we have just spoken about. For instance, Jeems goes to a west-end dinner party, and seeing his partner

applying now and again to her smelling bottle, he asked, "Is that Islay or Campbeltown, mem? There canna be muckle in't but maybe it's no reduced!" Or, take again, his opening paragraph in "A Monkey Adventure"—

"I don't know in the hale worl', Bailie, a mair curioser beast than a monkey. The monkeys can dae everything but speak, an' some aloo they could speak weel enough, only they're afraid they wad be made tae work. Then Darwin an' Huxley tell us that, according taethescience o' revolution, we're a' descended frae monkeys, an' oor tails hae, through successive generations o' sitting on them, at last got worn awa' a'thegither,—no' verra flattering at a' at a', I wid say."

Mr. Macmillan's articles make fine readings, and our best readers are continually laying themselves under obligation to the experiences of the worthy coal merchant.

The author remembers well the first time he saw an article of his announced as one of the items to be read at an entertainment. The reader was Mr. Vallance. He read the "Christmas Goose," and the animal, as it does in the story, nearly brought down the house. Mr. Charles Ferguson is one of the best delineators of the character, and has received permission repeatedly from our author to head his bills, "Jeems Kaye is coming," which never failed to draw a crowd for that talented reader.

"Jeems's" fame has travelled far and wide, while the author of the conception has seldom travelled as far South as London; preferring to spend his holidays in the wilds of Connemara or among the rugged grandeur of our Scottish Highlands. Australian and American papers have copied time and again these popular articles from *The Bailie*, and the members of a club in Levuka, the capital of the Fiji Islands, voted the genial Provost o' Stra'bungo a perpetual patron.

Mr. Macmillan published his first book in 1883. It was thought prudent to restrict the first issue to one thousand copies, but the results of the first day's sales showed that the author had far too modest an estimate of his hold on the reading public, for by three o'clock the edition was entirely sold out. The second thousand went in two days, and so popular a hold has the book taken that twenty-seven thousand have been sold of this first series.

Three years later (1886) saw the issue of a second series, and in 1888 appeared the third, both of them being accorded a hearty welcome and a ready sale. In 1891 Mr. Macmillan's publishers, Messrs. Menzies & Co., sent out a new issue of his first and second series, both having been out of print for some time. The amusingly characteristic sketches on the covers are by J. E. Christie; drawings which have received the highest praise from the press.

Interspersed throughout the first and second series are a number of clever illustrations, having the signatures of the best known names belonging to the brush-and palette kingdom in the West of Scotland, while in the third series Mr. Christie is entirely responsible for the artistic department. As to the press notices of the books, they are legion, and all high in praise of the humour and fun that sparkle in every page.

NEIL MUNRO.



*Yours sincerely
Neil Munro*

A PERUSAL of Mr. Neil Munro's volume, "The Lost Pibroch, and other Sheiling Stories"—those dreamy, fascinating, sometimes weird, but never commonplace, tales of the Western Highlands—naturally leads the reader's mind

to the subject of Highland poetry, and, especially, its pipe music. The opening sentence of the initial story gives the keynote of a strain that to some extent runs all through the sketches—

“To the make of a piper go seven years of his own learning and seven generations before. If it is in, it will out, as the Gaelic old-word says; if not, let him take to the net or sword. At the end of his seven years one born to it will stand at the start of knowledge, and leaning a fond ear to the drone, he may have parley with old folks of old affairs. Playing the tune of the ‘Fairy Harp,’ he can hear his fore-folks, plaided in skins, towsy-headed and terrible, grunting at the oars and snoring in the caves; he has his whittle and club in the ‘Desperate Battle’ (my own tune, my darling!), where the white-haired sea-rovers are on the shore, and a stain’s on the edge of the tide; or, trying his art on Laments, he can stand by the cairn of kings, ken the colour of Fingal’s hair, and see the moon-glint on the hook of the Druids!”

Take the Marches, for instance. The stirring strains of these—“The tune with the river in it, the fast river and the courageous, that kens not stop nor tarry . . . the tune of the heroes”—bring to a Highlander’s imagination in touch with the outstanding incidents of his clan that are ever associated with the tune, as surely as the martial music of “Scots wha hae” carries the listener back nigh six hundred years, and he views the wild carnage on Bannockburn plain.

The plaintive wail of the “Floors o’ the Forest,” will ever bring to mind Flodden Field. This is beautifully put by George Macdonald in his “Robert Falconer,” when one of the characters described how he had heard an old friend play that tune on the violin. “To hear the bow croudin’ (cooing) and wailin’, an’ greetin’ ower the strings, wad hae jist garred ye see the lands o’ braid Scotlan’ wi’ a’ the lasses greetin’ for the lads that lay upo’ reid Flodden side; lasses to cut, and lasses to gether, and lasses to bin’, and lasses to stook, and lasses to lead, and no’ a lad amo’ them a’. It’s just the murnin’ o’ women, doin’ men’s wark as weel’s their ain, for the men that suld hae been there to du’t; and I’s warran’ ye, no’ a word to the orra (exceptional) lad that didna gang wi’ the lave” (rest). And the Laments of the clans have the same effect on the minds of a Highlander; as Mr. Munro

has it, when Gilian of Clanlachlan of Strathlachlan took the pipes in hand and played "Muintir a' Ghlinne so—People of this Glen."

"He put his fingers on the holes, and his heart took a leap back over two generations, and yonder was Glencoe! The grey day crawled on the white hills and the black roofs smoked below. Snow choked the pass, *eas* and corrie filled with drift and flatted to the brae-face; the wind tossed quirky and cruel in the little bushes and among the smooching lintels and joists; the blood of old and young lapped on the hearthstone, and the bairn, with a knifed throat, had an icy lip on a frozen teat. Out of the place went the tramped path of the Campbell butchers—far on their way to Glenlyon and the towns of paper and ink and liars—'Muintir a' ghlinne so, muintir a' ghlinne so!'—People, people, people of this glen, this glen, this glen!"

Strong writing that, and yet the memory of a Highlander of these parts were to die within him, did not the name of Glencoe bring back in lurid light the treachery and butchery of that fateful day.

Paruig Dall, the blind piper of Half Town, finds himself with Gilian and Rory Ban of the Macnaughtons, of Dundarare, for his guests in his bothy with its "turf walls and never a window." The guests are pipers as well, and they played "tune about while time went by the door," and the people of Half Town sat up, loath to lie down while the pipers played.

At last Paruig plays to his two friends, on the great pipes, "The Lost Pibroch, the Pibroch of Good-byes." "It is the tune of broken clans," he told them, "that sets men on the foray and makes cold hearthstones." . . . "It is the tune that puts men on the open road, that makes restless lads and seeking women."

"And the people sitting up in their beds in Half Town moaned for something new. 'Paruig Dall is putting the strange tune on her there,' said they. 'What the meaning of it is we must ask in the morning, but, *ochanoch*! it leaves one hungry at the heart.' And then gusty winds came snell from the north, and where the dark crept first, the day made his first showing, so that Ben Ime rose black against a grey sky.

“‘That’s the Lost *Piobaireachd*,’ said Paruig Dall when the bag sunk on his arm.

“And the two men looked at him in a daze.”

An authority on the subject of Highland music says, “One cannot help being struck with the peculiar good taste that pervades all the compositions of the M’Crimmon’s, the famous pipers of the Macleods, and how wonderfully the music and instrument are adapted to each other. The violation of this last condition, no doubt, led to the unpopularity of the bagpipe and its music among a large class of the English-speaking community, who speak of the discordant notes, a reflection to which it is not in the least liable in the case of compositions adapted to its scale.” And, we would venture to add, that the English-speaking critics never can realise the full force and beauty of this music of the hills and the straths, that blends with the rushing torrent, that tears up the breast of the hill, or wails with the light winds that moan in the woods. The significance of each tune is lost to them, for the associations connected with the March or Lament—all that goes to stir the mind and heart of the Celtic listener—is a dead letter to them.

These tunes speak to the Celt, of his home that is in the sweet-smelling glen, or on the hill face, or by the shores of the loch, as truly as “Home, Sweet Home” appeals to the heart of his lowland mate who, it may be, *bivouacs* with him side by side by the camp-fires in the depths of the forest, thousands of miles from Scotia’s shores.

“Red Hand,” another of the tales, has for its “note” the bagpipe, and the keen rivalry and intense desire to excel in the playing of this ancient instrument.

“Black Murdo,” the best, we think, of these clever stories, is a tragic bit of writing, and shews the author at his best. He brings out, in this sketch, in strong colours, the bitter enmity and strife that existed between the clans in days gone by. “War” is ever a pitiful tale, and Mr. Munro’s sketch under that title is a scathing commentary on the pains and trials and suffering of the women left at home, to weep and to wait, mayhap to starve.

This volume from Mr. Munro’s pen is made up of about a dozen of these Sheiling stories, all of them written with a strong hand, vivid in style, and refreshingly new and

original. It has been truly said that Mr. Munro "has no master."

It will not surprise anyone who has read "The Lost Pibroch," to find that the author was born in Inveraray, and that his forebears were shepherds and farmers in Glenaray, on the bank of the lovely Loch Awe, for his writings savour distinctly of that locality; indeed the book teems with eloquent passages descriptive of the fine scenery by the banks of the Aray; by Loch Awe side, Loch Fyne, and the Cowal country. He was educated in the ducal town, and it was in a lawyer's office there that he first faced the world in an attempt to make his own living.

While a law apprentice he came across a copy of the "Reporter's Companion," and from that he managed, without teacher or assistance to make himself thoroughly proficient in the "winged art." This feat, and it was no mean one, was characteristic of the lad, and remains with the man. Once he had determined to master phonography, no obstacle could damp his courage and perseverance, hence his success as a newspaper reporter; and some smart things can be told of him in that connection. When Mr. Munro came to Clyde-side some fourteen years ago he was successful in obtaining an opening on the staff of the *Greenock Advertiser*. Thereafter he was employed on the *Glasgow News* under Mr. Wicks. Again he made a change, and transferred his services to the *Falkirk Herald*, but a short time found him back in his old quarters in Hope Street, on the invitation of his former chief.

After *The Glasgow News* became *non est*, Mr. Munro was appointed chief reporter on the *Evening News*, and his smart, original writing in the columns of that journal has contributed substantially to put it in the forward position in which it now stands. Some time ago further recognition of his abilities was experienced when the proprietors of the *News* promoted him to a sub-editor's desk, and now he performs the duties of assistant editor, art critic, and reviewer. Mr. Munro's first distinct literary success came to him when his story, "The Secret of the Heather Ale," appeared in *The Speaker*, in the year 1893. That was followed by "Red Hand," which was published in the columns of the *National Observer*. Then the editor of *Blackwood's Magazine* accepted

"Shudderman Soldier" which proved the beginning of a connection that has continued till now; Messrs. Blackwood being the publishers of "The Lost Pibroch."

Mr. Munro has just commenced a serial tale in *Blackwood's Magazine*, entitled "John Splendid: the Tale of a Poor Gentleman, and the Wars of Lorn," and, besides, has been engaged to write the serial for *Good Words*.

A writer in the *Windsor Magazine* in a notice of our author, said, "Mr. Munro is only thirty-two, and when he crosses the bridge between daily journalism and literature, better work may be expected from him than he has yet, in the intervals of his busy routine work, been able to produce." Even as we write there are rumours in the air of the crossing of the bridge.

All know the heart-hunger for his native land that possessed the soul of that exiled genius, Robert Louis Stevenson, who passed away in his Samoan home upon the 8th December, 1894, and this great longing has never found more eloquent voice, nor has the genius of the author of "Treasure Island" found more fitting pæan, than in those lines by Mr. Munro.

R. L. S.

BEFORE the firelight in the sober gloaming,
 The one far-wandered readily will tell
 The brave memorials of his weary roaming,
 Until he holds us in a warlock spell.
 And sudden at the lozen comes a rapping—
 "Oh, Sennachie, I'd speak wi' ye my son!"
 The wanderer for the cold night must be happing
 Ere yet his latest tale is half-way done.

And when the door is snecked behind the rover,
 Who went with yon convoy we dare not name,
 We tell again his curious stories over,
 The thought in every heart the same, the same—
 "Oh, these were fine, the stories he narrated
 But there were others that he had in store;
 Ours was the gain, indeed, could he have waited,
 But now our ears are vain for ever more."

So you are happed and gone, and there you're lying
 Deep down the world, upon the slope of seas;
 Upon the lonely peak where clouds are flying,
 No sounds of homeland on the feverish breeze.
 We need not keep the peat and crusie glowing,
 The good-wife may put by her ale and bread,

For you that kept the crack so blythely going
Have learned the dour, dull silence of the dead.

Far, far away, where Væa saw day waning,
On bossy isles that stud the dreary main,
Did you expect, your eager vision straining,
To catch a blink of Scotland's lights again ?
To hear the laverock's pipe, the kirk bell's clanging,
Come on some errant breeze across the waves,
Or smell the sweetness of the birches hanging
Above the unforgotten martyrs' graves ?

Snell winter's here, the mists like wool are trailing,
The busy rain-smirr rots the fallen leaf ;
Among the glens old Ossian's ghosts are wailing
As if they guessed at something of our grief ;
But one last sprig of the Highland heather's growing
Upon the hills of home that well you knew,
And it (oh ! tell him, wind that's south'ard blowing),
My wanderer, my Sennachie, 's for you !

The following lines are quite in Mr. Munro's original style. The conception of "The Nettle," as the tender sympathetic friend who would hide away everything that would remind you of your past grief is very fine—

THE NETTLE.

IN yon valley I had friends once ;
There I have friends no more,
For lowly lies the ratter,
And the lintel of the door.
The friends are all departed,
The hearthstone's black and cold,
And sturdy grows the nettle
On the place I loved of old.

The fires were scarce in ember
Or the windows blank and dim,
And the song was scarce concluded,
Or the garden out of trim,
When up came good Sir Nettle
(True friend to me this day !)
And the signs of man's futility,
He hid them all away.

O, black might be that ruin
Where my fathers dwelt so long,
And nothing hide the shame of it,
The ugliness and wrong ;

The cabar and the corner-stone
 Might bleach in winds and rains,
 But for the friendly nettle
 That took such a courtier's pains.

Here's one who has no quarrel
 With the nettle thick and tall
 That wraps the chilly hearthstone
 And screens the humbled wall,
 That clusters on the footpath
 Where the children used to play,
 And guards a household's sepulchre
 From all who come the way.

There's deer upon the mountain,
 There's sheep along the glen,
 The forests hum with feather,
 But where are now the men?
 Here's but the lowly *laroch*,*
 Where soft the footsteps fall;
 My folks are quite forgotten,
 And the nettle's over all.

Fancy our city street lamps causing our poet to blossom into verse. The humour is as refreshing as the style is chaste—

FLORA IN URBE.

'Tis springtime for the city flowers, the lights that deck the street,
 For genial dusk is dropping, and the chilly day is done;
 And one by one they bourgeon into blossoms grave and sweet,
 Perennials of the evening, far too shy to face the sun.
 Each gas-lamp is a buttercup, with calyx yellow-hued,
 And those electric radiances lavishly bestrewed!
 Are marguerites, tall marguerites, bedewed!

O! there are other gardens rich with flowers that flaunt a-row,
 Where roses riot foolishly, and pansies smile elate;
 But give to me the parterres where the evening petals glow,
 Dear buttercups and marguerites, so tranquil and sedate.
 Ah! sorrow that they bloom so fast and cannot longer stay,
 But lose their dainty joyance in the first chill of the day,
 And wither, fragile darlings, all away!

* *Laroch*, the site of a ruined house.

ALEXANDER G. MURDOCH.



IT has long been the boast of Scotsmen that many of the brightest gems in our rich store of national song have been the product of men nurtured in the lowlier ranks of life ; men with little—or at least very moderate—educational advantages to start life with, men who knew not the ease that lies in the lap of luxury, but whose genius enabled them to surmount all difficulties.

The closing years of the seventeenth century saw the birth of Allan Ramsay, who became a wigmaker to trade. Sixty years after, there was born Hector Macneill, the author of "Come under my Plaidie," and then, with the lapse of other thirteen years, there came to this world 'mid the humble surrounding of the auld clay biggin' at Ayr, a child destined to become that bright particular star in the poetic firmament—Robert Burns. Following him came John Mayne, who started life as a printer's apprentice, and will be remembered

for his "Logan Braes;" James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd; Robert Tannahill, Paisley's most famous son; Allan Cunningham, the gifted stone-mason; Alexander Rodger, a Glasgow weaver, whose "Robin Tamson's Smiddy" will be remembered while the Doric tongue is known; Archibald Mackay, who wrote that pathetic gem, "Be kind to Auld Grannie"; Janet Hamilton, Hugh Macdonald, and many others.

The year 1891 saw the death of a gifted poet: a singer who rose from the ranks of the people, who, though he may not have written any one song that shall carry his name down to posterity, is the author of many fine poems that have made his name familiar to every reader of the periodical literature of the last twenty years, both in this country and in America, and which have gained for him an honourable position in the gallery of modern Scottish poets.

Alexander G. Murdoch was born in the year 1843, in the northern part of our city, within sight of that grand old centre-piece of the ecclesiastical history of the West of Scotland, our Glasgow Cathedral.

On the completion of an ordinary school education he was, at his own request, apprenticed to the marine-engineering trade. Completing his apprenticeship, he wrought for a number of years under various employers, till at length, in 1878, he forsook the bench for the desk, and determined to depend on the fruits of his literary labours for a living, receiving at that time a post on the permanent staff of the *Mail*.

Early in life Mr. Murdoch felt the faint twitterings of fledgling-poetic thought and fancy, and these were expressed in rhyme which ran its measured numbers instinctively, and before he had begun to read and study verse-making as an art. As early as his eighteenth year he gained the first prize in a competition in connection with a London weekly magazine. His next milestone was gained when he carried off the first prize in connection with the Christmas competition of the *People's Journal*.

The year in which a poet sends out, oft with fear and trembling, "his dearest wish and first reward—his book in 'guid black prent,'" usually marks an epoch, and 1873, we have no doubt, would be often looked back upon with feelings of pride, for in that year "Lilts in the Doric Lyre," Mr.

Murdoch's first venture, made its appearance, and by its rapid sale removed any apprehensions its author may have experienced.

Four years later his most important contribution to poetic literature, "The Laird's Lykewake, and other Poems," was published, and, like its forerunner, received a decided and cordial welcome from the public.

The year in which he published his next volume, "Rhymes and Lyrics," gives the date to one of Mr. Murdoch's most decided triumphs, for in 1879 he secured, against sixty-five competitors, the Prize Medal offered by the Committee of the Burns Monument, Kilmarnock, for the best poem on Burns, not exceeding fifty lines. By some it is considered the best of his English verse. The opening and closing stanzas which we here quote will give a fair idea of the broad sympathetic spirit with which he deals with the soul-inspiring theme :

I HANDLE life's kaleidoscope, and lo ! as round it turns,
I see, beneath an arc of hope, the young boy-poet, Burns,
Dream-visioned, all the long rich day he toils with pulse of pride
Among the sun-gilt ricks of hay, his ' Nelly ' by his side ;
The world to him seems wondrous fair : sunrise and sunset fill
With music all the love-touched air, enton'd in bird and rill ;
Time moves apace—the ardent boy confronts life's deepening fight,
And ' Handsome Nell '—a first-love joy—melts into memory's light.

I look again, and shining noon still finds him chain'd to toil,
His soul thron'd with the lark, song-pois'd above the daisied soil.
Mossgiel ! upon thy green sward now the song-king grandly stands,
God's sunshine on his face and brow, the plough-horns in his hands :
Mouse, that dost run with ' bickerin' gait ' ! stay, stay thy trembling
flight.

The bard who wept the ' Daisy's ' fate laments thy hapless plight ;
And, perchance, when the gloamin' lies on glen and hillside green,
Thy mishap may re-wet his eyes told o'er to ' Bonnie Jean.'

Sun, that no shadow now can cloud ! Heart, that no sorrow wrings !
Man, in whose praises all are loud ! Voice, that forever sings !
A people's love, the holy bier that holds thy worth in trust.
With glory flashing through the tear that drops above thy dust ;

O rich inheritor of fame, rewarded well at last,
Whose strong soul, like a sword of flame, smites with fierce light the
past,
This sculptured pile, in trumpet tones, attests thy vast renown,
A nobler heirship than the thrones to princes handed down.

Mr. Murdoch's greater and more recent success with a competitive poem was scored when he was awarded the gold medal for his lines entitled, "Kossuth at the grave of Burns"; a medal offered by a native of Dumfries for the best poem commemorative of the visit, thirty years before, of the great Hungarian patriot to the mausoleum. In an issue of the *Dumfries Standard*, published at the time of M. Kossuth's visit, appeared the following:—"M. Kossuth entered the mausoleum with reverent step, and as if absorbed by the intensity of his thoughts. He gazed long in pensive sadness at the figure of the ploughman poet. . . . Kossuth at the grave of Burns—the patriot chief dropping a tear over the dust of the patriot bard! What a subject for a poet! Will no lyre awake under the influence of such a theme?"

It was this same quotation, embodied in a book published from the same office, that suggested the competition.

To sing of the glorious genius of his beloved Burns always gave intense pleasure to Mr. Murdoch, and consequently called forth the richest tones from his lyre.

"The Laird's Lykewake" is a narrative poem, and, according to a competent authority, the late George Gilfillan, goes a long way in fulfilling what had ever been a cherished ideal of his—the poetry and interest of a *Lykewake*. In this piece are preserved the chief characteristics of what is now, happily, a thing of the past, when the friends of the departed spent the "eerie nicht" in the same apartment with the corpse; the "crack" being assisted along by the aid of whisky, cheese, and cake. Of the tales told by the "jamb freens" of the departed Laird that night, "The Wa'-gaun o' Wee Nell" seems to us the finest bit of composition. Its pathos and tenderness are unmistakable, and yet not a line or expression is overdrawn.

His reading, "The Battle of Drumclog," is a graphically-drawn picture, painted with bold rugged strokes that befit the subject. Equal for strength of pulse is his "Midnight Forge;" here we have a noble paraphrase of the dignity of labour by a veritable son of Vulcan himself.

Mr. Murdoch is essentially a poet of the people, and has always, with true, unerring note, sung of the labourer in the workshop, or by his hearth with fond wife and happy children.

Who has not heard and laughed heartily over his mirth-provoking lines :

SHOOSIE, YE JAUD !

A DEIL o' a lassie to scamper an' rin ;
Bare-fitted, bare-headed, and wild as the win' :
For ever in mischief, and whiles in a haud ;
O, weel dae I mind o' ye—Shoosie, ye jaud !

Aye scorin' along, like a boat under sail,
The nails aff yer taes, an' yer broo never hale,
Aye takin' the gait was expressly forbad ;
The auld folks shook heids owre ye—Shoosie, ye jaud !

A' lassie bit playthings aside ye wad fling ;
But gie ye a 'peerie' wi' plenty o' string,
Or a big spinnin' 'tap' wi' a whuppin' skrudge ca'd,
And ye lick't a' the laddies clean—Shoosie, ye jaud !

Oor auld-fashion'd schule maister—Specky M'Nair—
To teach ye the 'penny book' strove lang and sair :
But oh ! yer queer spelling aye drove him miles mad,
And cost him much extra snuff—Shoosie, ye jaud !

And then in the play-hours, sic fun ye were at ;
Whiles stealin' a bonnet, whiles after a cat ;
A thocht-scatter'd toozie-like look ye aye had ;
Ye ocht to had breeks on ye—Shoosie, ye jaud !

Whiles scorin' the hauf o' the pavement wi' chalk ;
Whiles fleein' a 'dragon' as high's 'Tennant's stalk' ;
Ne'er fearin' a fa', nor a broo-duntin' daud,
A perfect wee deil ye was—Shoosie, ye jaud !

But somehow or ither, as time it gaed roun',
A change cam' aboot, like the change o' the moon ;
The wheel o' fair fortune up-turn'd ye a lad,
And ye took to the looking glass—Shoosie, ye jaud !

And whiles it's the roughest and tooziest bairn
That grows up the doucest ; and prood I'm to learn,
(Tho' misunderstood lang, and muckle misca'd),
Ye're baith wife an' mither noo—Shoosie, ye jaud !

And lang may the blink o' a couthie fireside
Be wi' ye to cheer ye, whate'er else betide ;—
Till grand-weans and great-grand-weans, clap and applaud,
This rhyme o' yer early days—Shoosie, ye jaud !

Mr. Murdoch likewise contributed largely to prose literature.

In the *People's Journal*, *Weekly Mail*, and other newspapers, have appeared serial stories of a very popular character.

The reader never tired while Mr. Murdoch held the pen. There was no want of *verve*. Of humour there was abundance, and each character was drawn from the daily life of our working classes, of whose struggles and trials the author was intimately acquainted from conscientious study.

His principal serials were, "Fire and Sword," "Sweet Nelly Gray," "Bob Allan's Lass," and "Wandering Steenie."

In the year 1880 Mr. Murdoch contributed a series of articles to the *Daily Mail*, entitled, "Recent and Living Scottish Poets." These highly interesting and carefully prepared biographies and studies have since been published in a collected form, and have run into a second edition. "Scotch Fiddlers and Fiddle Making" is the title of another series of articles, contributed to the same paper, and these also have been welcomed by the public since appearing in book form.

Humorous Scotch Readings was another branch of literature to which our subject made many admirable additions, and his name is known on Scottish, as well as on American platforms as the author of many clever sketches, the happy doric of which come as a waft from the hills where blooms "Oor ain native heather."

Mr. Murdoch died at his own residence, Bellgrove Street, Glasgow, on Thursday, 12th February, 1891.

As we lay down the pen, these lines of his steal into our memory, and we re-echo the larger hope therein contained.

Hame we a' maun hurry fast,
Be the pairtin's e'er sae sair,
But we'll a' meet safe at last
In the fauld o' God's ain care.

JAMES NICHOLSON.



James Nicholson

MR. FRANK T. MARZIALS, in his delightful monograph of Charles Dickens, says that great writer's education—meaning by education, the whole set of circumstances which go to mould a man's character—however untoward and unpromising it may often have seemed while in the process, must really be pronounced a prize of value quite inestimable. He calls those circumstances a prize which have been such as to develop the man's powers to the utmost. These remarks were brought to our mind as we thought of the years of hard work and bitter discouragement

experienced from his earliest years by James Nicholson, and in his case the prize is evidenced, as an admirer says of him elsewhere, in "that pervading humanity and reality in his verse which cannot fail to arrest and please."

James Nicholson was born at Edinburgh, 21st October, 1822, into a family where "stinted meals, sour looks, and days of taciturnity" were the rule, and joy of any kind the exception. To the poetic child the brightest snatches of colour in the sober sadness of these early days were those times when he accompanied his father in his favourite walk on Sabbath mornings to St. Bernard's Well. He had only been three weeks at school when the family removed to Paisley, where domestic trials and poverty and death came to darken their lot. When only seven years old he was sent to labour in a tobacco factory at the, by no means, handsome salary of 1s. per week, and, as he says, "here commenced my real education." It can hardly be said that the school was a good one, and only a noble nature could have resisted the bad influences amidst which he had to live. His fellow-workers were a lot of bad, vicious boys, who were trained in every form of vice by the men, who encouraged the boys to fight with each other and indulged in the most profane and obscene language amongst themselves. We cannot but appreciate highly the lad who could go through that experience uncontaminated: who, in fact, came out of it stronger, because fully determined to eschew evil ways, and devote all his spare moments to the improvement of his mind.

At this time books held mysteries unknown to young Nicholson, but he ardently longed to become acquainted with them, and painfully acquired the art of reading by a persistent study of sign boards and handbills. Frequently on his way home for meals he would stand at a stationer's window and endeavour to read the books that were open to view, and sometimes lingered so long that he had to run home, swallow his scanty meal, and run back to the workshop or he would have been absent over the stipulated time. Again the family removed, this time to Strathaven, where he was engaged as a herd boy with a farmer. Speaking of Strathaven puts us in mind of a neat little picture of the place contained in these lines by Ellen C. Nicholson, a daughter of the poet:

“Deep doun i’ the strath lies the auld grey toun
Deep doun i’ the strath sae green,
Wi’ the hills aroun’, an’ the muirlan’s broun,
An’ the bonnie birk wuds between.
Wi’ its queer, auld streets, an’ its boo-backed brig
Ower the burn, where the wee troot hide ;
Wi’ its ae tall spire, an’ its green kirkyaird,
Far up on the lone hillside.”

At the end of the term he hired himself to a sheep farmer in the neighbourhood, and this employment, for a time at least, he found more congenial in his tastes. The duty of watching the sheep far up on the hill-tops is not arduous, and affords leisure to the herd, which Nicholson employed in reading. He soon tired of this situation, however, and we next find him taking the road for Edinburgh, where his grandfather resided, and with him he settled down to the business of tailoring.

Up till this time he could not write, and with a view to learn he got his grandfather to set him a copy of the written letters of the alphabet. With the old man for his tutor he was able, after great perseverance, to write in a way, though, not very legibly. After he had learned his trade with his grandfather he returned home, and commenced work as a tailor under his father, who, at that time, was foreman to a firm in the village where they resided.

It was about this period that the first pulsations of the poetic faculty made themselves apparent in attempts at verse. “Sorry verses they were,” he was wont to say, “but they gratified me at the time and stimulated me to continue the pleasing task.”

In this nineteenth year Nicholson’s first printed poem appeared in the columns of the *Christian Journal*, when the following notice appeared on the cover: “Our first poetical contribution for this month merits a note of introduction. After reading verses containing so much true poetic fancy, the reader will be surprised to learn that the author is so far deficient in literary attainments that scarcely a line of his MS. but required some orthographical correction. We say this to J. N.’s credit, and for the encouragement of others.”

We quote the first three verses, and feel sure the reader will echo the laudatory remarks of the editor. The poem was entitled :

TO A CHILD GAZING ON THE STARRY HEAVENS.

CHILD of all loveliness, emblem of purity !
 Innocent, tell me at what dost thou gaze !
 Thy soul, like the seer's, seems wrapt in futurity ;
 Lovely thou art, 'neath the moon's pallid rays.
 Say, art thou tracing the course of yon milky way,
 Stretching afar o'er an emerald sea ?
 How can the blaze of the star-studded canopy,
 Fill with delight a sweet infant like thee.
 Still thou art gazing with childish intensity !
 Say, art thou watching each bright little star,
 Threading its way o'er the plains of immensity !
 And casting on thee its sweet smile from afar ?

In 1843, Mr. Nicholson married and set up in business for himself. At that time, also, he began what has ever since been his favourite study—botany ; and in a short time he knew all the plants in the neighbourhood within a circuit of eight miles. In 1849, he contributed to the pages of *The Working Man's Friend*, a London publication, and gained various prizes in books.

Nothing particular occurred to alter the even tenor of his way till the year 1853, when he received the appointment of tailor at Merryflats, Govan. Some years ago the directors of this institution kindly agreed that the children of the house should be taken out occasionally to the country for a walk, under the care of their teacher and Mr. Nicholson, and these walks, not unfrequently took the direction of Craigton Cemetery, where now rest all that is mortal of the big, warm-hearted "Faither" of the poor-house orphan bairns. Within the last two years, Mr. Nicholson had spent much of his time with the young folks, the directors having recognised his long and faithful services and granted him a retiring allowance.

His lines entitled "A Faither to ye a'," give a description of one of these rambles with the little ones.

A FAITHER TO YE A'.

O WHA's aucht thae wee bairnies ? I aften hear folks say,
 As cheerily alang the road we march on ootin' day,
 Wi' lightsome heart an' lithesome step to breathe the caller air,
 Weel happit a' frae heid to heel, an' watched wi' lovin' care.

They're only Puirshoose weans, my frien's ; nae doot ye think it queer
 That they should play like ither bairns, an' lauch as lood on' clear,

Just like yer ain wee tots at hame, as tosh, weel-kempt, an' braw,
While as for me, I'm, as you see, a faither to them a'.

Sae come awa', my bairnies a', the days are growin' lang,
The birds are waitin' in the wuds to warble ye a sang ;
The gowans glint amang the grass, the birds are on the tree,
While saft an' lowne the sunlicht fa's frae heaven on you an' me.

The muckle-hoose is nae disgrace, nor yet that ye are puir.
An', God be praised, ye're no' to blame for ocht that sent you there.
Nae doot ye miss the loved an' lost, yer mithers maist o' a',
But never heed while here am I, a faither to ye a'.

Hoo sweet the blythe wee birdies sing, sae weel they love the Spring.
An' blyther yet they'll be to see ye dance in merry ring ;
Here, in the wud, ye'll sport an' play, like lambs upon the lea,
An' when ye're tired, or oot o' breath, jist sit an' rest a-wee.

Syne roun' ye'll go at jingo-ring, or row-chow doon the brae,
Meanwhile the laddies by themsel's will rin, an' jump, an' play
At "rounders" in the open space, or smugglers in the shaw,
While in yer games I'll join mysel', the blithest o' ye a'.

It's oh, but bairns are bonnie ! Hoo I like to see them rin,
Their sunny locks o' wavy gowd a-streamin' in the win'.
Their gleefu' lauch like siller bells, their e'en wi' mirth alowe,
Their lips like dew-wat roses, an' their cheeks wi' health aglow.

The lassies a' sae licht o' heart, the laddies wud wi' glee,
The very craws keek owre their nests to get a blink o' ye ;
Gin there's ae hour in a' the day that passes swift awa',
It's when ye're in the wud, an' me the faither owre ye a'.

Tell owre yer wee life-histories—methinks even I could tell
O' sunless days an' loveless weird that I hae dree'd mysel',
An' should the tear o' sympathy adoon some wee cheek fa'.
We'll kiss't awa', for weel ye ken I dearly lo'e ye a'.

Wha daur look doon on sic as ye, oor ain sweet kith an' kin ?
For we are a' John Tamson's bairns, whatever sphere we're in ;
The dairy frock an' daidlie, nae ane should e'er despise,
For even a Puirhouse wean may be an angel in disguise.

An' 'twel ye're angels a' to me, in ilk wee guileless face
The tender look o' Him wha blest wee bairnies I can trace ;
An' I, like Him, will love ye, dears, while I hae breath to draw,
An' some day hence ye'll think o' him wha dearly loved ye a'.

His first book of any importance was entitled "Willie Waugh ; or the Angel o' Hame," published in 1861 ; a second and enlarged edition, including some poems by his daughter, appearing in 1884. In 1863, appeared "Kilwuddie and other Poems," from which we quote one or two gems of doric verse. The following, taken from "Oor Wee Kate,"

gives a humorous picture of a stirring "throuther" lassie :

Was there ever sic a lassie kent, as oor Wee Kate ?
There's no' a wean in a' the toon like oor Wee Kate ;
Baith in an' oot, at kirk an' schule, she rins at sic a rate,
A pair o' shoon just lasts a month wi' oor Wee Kate.

I wish she'd been a callan, she's sic a steerin' quean—
For ribbons, dolls, an' a' sic gear she disna care a preen,
For taps an' bools, girs, ba's, an' bats, she plays wi' ear' an late ;
I'll hae to get a pair o' breeks for oor Wee Kate.

Na, wha do ye think ? the ither day, as sure as onything—
I saw her fleein' draigons, wi' maist a mile o' string ;
Yer jumpin' rapes an' peveralls she flings oot o' her gate,
An' nane can fire a tow-gun like oor Wee Kate.

And who has not laughed heartily over these happy lines culled from his song

"IMPH-M."

WHEN I was a laddie langsyne at the schule,
The maister aye ca'd me a dunce an' a fule ;
For somehoo his words I could ne'er un'erstan',
Unless when he bawled "Jamie ! haud oot yer han' !"

Then I gloom'd and said "Imph-m"—

I glunch'd and said "Imph-m"—

I wasna owre prood, but owre dour to say—Ay !

Ae day a qeer word, as lang-nebbit's himsel',
He vow'd he wad thrash me if I wadna spell,
Quo' I, "Maister Quill," wi' a kin' o' a swither,
"I'll spell ye the word if ye'll spell me anither ;

Let's hear ye spell 'Imph-m,'

That common word 'Imph-m,'

That auld Scotch word 'Imph-m,' ye ken it means Ay !"

Had ye seen hoo he glowr'd, hoo he scratch'd his big pate,

An' shouted, "Ye villain, get oot o' my gate !

Get aff to ye're seat, ye're the plague o' the schule !

The deil o' me kens if yer maist rogue or fule."

But I only said "Imph-m,"

That pawkie word "Imph-m,"

He cou'dna spell "Imph-m," that stands for an Ay !

"Idylls o' Hame and other Poems" was published in 1870, followed by his most popular collection of verse, "Tibbie's Garland." Over 3000 copies of this book have already been sold ; a new and largely augmented edition having been placed before the public six years ago.

Mr. Nicholson has all along been an abstainer, and on his lyre has often sung the praises of the temperance cause. A

newspaper critic of James Nicholson's latest edition of "Tibbie's Garland" said very truly "It may be doubted whether any man has done more by oratory for the cause of temperance than Mr. Nicholson has done by his poetry."

Of his later poems none are more pathetic than these chaste lines :

A KISS FRAE A BAIRNIE'S MOU'.

IT'S here we get mony a foretaste o' heaven,
An' pleasures richt mony, I troo,
But I maun declare there's nocht to compare
Wi' a kiss frae a bairnie's mou'.

Sae sweet, oh, sae sweet ! are the wee hinied lips—
Like rose-petals wat wi' the dew ;
While wee han'ies clasp roun' yer neck like a hasp,
To reach ye the wee rosy mou'.

Langsyne—as we read—when the Maister himsel'
To his bosom the wee lambies drew—
I canna help thinkin' He'd kiss ane an' a',
An' pree ilka rosy wee mou'.

I see them, methinks, wi' their wee tousie heids,
An' scant in their cleadin', maybe ;
While shaeless an' sockless, nae less, the wee feet
That danced on the kind Maister's knee.

Sad, sad were the days oor dear Lord spent on earth,
The pleasures he had were but few ;
But a glow frae aboon wad come back to his heart
As he kiss'd ilka rosy wee mou'.

Oh, man, brither man ! wi' fause pleasures misled,
An' the keel-mark o' Cain on thy broo.
Gin ocht oot o' heav'n that stain could efface
It's the kiss frae a wee bairnie's mou'.

Then clasp to thy bosom some guileless wee wean,
An' gaze in its twa een o' blue ;
An' like me ye'll confess there is nae blessedness
Like the kiss frae a bairnie's mou'.

Just ae ither word—it's the will o' the Lord,
That they wha his followers be,
When tempted an' tried in His love should confide,
Like the wee tots that danced on His knee.

A volume of poems by Mr. Nicholson and his daughter—Ellen C. Nicholson—was published in 1880. Over and above all this he has added his quota to the books written on botany and astronomy. "F'ather Fernie the Botanist,"

appeared in book form in 1868, having before that been published in the columns of *The Scottish Temperance League Journal*. In 1880, a series of papers on astronomy, written with a view to interest working-men in the study of that interesting science, were published in *The People's Friend*, and these were collected under the attractive title, "Nightly Wanderings in the Garden of the Sky."

Nothing in all James Nicholson's career gave him so much genuine pleasure, as when he was the recipient of a complimentary dinner given in the Cockburn Hotel, Glasgow, on the 12th January, 1895, when the following address, beautifully illuminated and mounted, which bore the signatures of all present, was presented to him from the hands of the Editor of *The People's Friend*:

TO

JAMES NICHOLSON,

POET, BOTANIST, AND ASTRONOMER.

"We, a company of contributors, assembled at a complimentary dinner given in your honour by the proprietors of the *People's Friend*, tender this address as a token of our esteem for you as a man, and our admiration for you as a poet. Unaided by birth or fortune, you have won distinction in many directions. Your advocacy of temperance in song and verse has made you the Laureate of the movement; your writings on botany and astronomy have been popular and stimulating; while your songs and poems have touched a chord in the heart of the Scottish people the echo of which will not quickly die. We congratulate you on your attainments, and earnestly trust that you may long be spared to add still further to the laurels you have so fairly won and nobly worn."

And now, as we go to press, comes word of the end, Mr. Nicholson having died, somewhat suddenly, at the school house, Merryflats—the residence of his daughter, Mrs. Snell, on Friday, 24th September, 1897.

Resting now the head that once was weary,
Silent now the voice once rich in song,
Brighter now the path that oft was dreary,
Home, mid souls that but to God belong.

REV. JAMES PATON, B.A.



WHEN it is said that the home-life of our subject has been told, and that lovingly and graphically, in the Autobiography of that good and great man,—outstanding among missionaries of the Cross,—Dr. John G. Paton, who has laboured for so many years in the New Hebrides, then it may be taken for granted that the home environment of the Rev. James Paton is known to thousands upon thousands in this and in other lands. Dr. John G. Paton, the famous Missionary, is the eldest of a family of eleven, and his brother James the youngest.

It is only appropriate and just that the youngest of the family should be linked, in our opening word, with the eldest, for to the credit of the younger brother it must be borne distinctly in mind that he was, in a very real and important sense not only editor but compiler of that fascinating life of Dr. Paton. The *Missionary* is the first to give full credit to his brother for his share in the work; a work acknowledged on all hands as one of the classics of missionary literature. It will be readily understood why such value should be placed on the editorial part of the work when we take into account the position and circumstances of Dr. Paton when these jottings were made. To gather up then, and place in the eminently readable and interesting way they now present, the incidents and experiences of one of the most perilous and eventful lives led by a pioneer of Christianity, was no mean task, and reflects the highest credit on the editor.

The Rev. James Paton was born at Torthorwald, four miles from Dumfries on the Lochmaben Road, 2nd April, 1843. Leaving the humble and happy peasant's home, James Paton, at the age of thirteen, passed straight from the Parish School and entered the University of Glasgow, the youngest student of his time. His associations are all woven around the old High Street College, for it was in the days of Ramsay and Lushington, and "Logic" Bob and "Moral" Will. Before he was seventeen, to his credit be it said, he had taken his degree of B.A., and was devoting himself to private tuition, to assist in maintaining himself and lessening the burden assumed by his brothers John and Walter, so that, after his second year at college, he became "self sustaining."

For two seasons he was English and Classical Assistant to Mr. Murray, of Greenock Belmont Academy, while prosecuting his divinity studies, during the summer months, at the old Reformed Presbyterian Hall, first in Glasgow and afterwards in Edinburgh. As early as his twenty-first year he was licensed to preach; and the following year he was ordained minister of a new congregation in Airdrie, which, under his preaching and guidance flourished exceedingly. Despite all this encouragement the young clergyman felt himself cramped in the old Reformed Presbyterian body,

more especially in regard to hymns, and organs, and terms of communion, and his next step took him within the fold of the National Zion. This he did in 1873, and within two years he was spiritual head of the large and flourishing new Parish Church of Flowerhill, Airdrie. After six years experience in that town he was transferred to St. George's, Paisley. There success followed his efforts as distinctly as they had done in Airdrie, and very soon the communion roll of his new charge was the largest in the ancient burgh. Sixteen years ago, Mr. Paton took a step, seldom taken by clergymen, and that was to leave a large and healthy congregation for one with a very meagre roll, and where the financial returns were far under those in his Paisley church. Mr. Paton, however, had faith in his own capabilities, and, over and above, felt there was a Higher Hand guiding his destinies; and he accepted the unanimous call to St. Paul's Church, Glasgow, where now there is a large and flourishing congregation. However, it is with Mr. Paton's literary achievements that we have here to deal especially.

As far back as 1870, he published "The Children's Psalm," being twelve meditations and twelve original spiritual songs on the twenty-third Psalm. In 1875 he published "Leila and other Poems," which was highly praised at the time. "Leila," is the story of Dr. Paton's experiences in Tanna, told beautifully and touchingly; the title of this narrative poem bearing the name of the young wife who died out there.

Of the shorter poems, the one which lends itself best to quotation is "The May-Day of the World." It is a fine thought fitly expressed, a song and a plea for charity; that charity which finds its true channel in kindly thoughts and actions, bestowed on our neighbours as we journey along the broad, hard-trodden pathway of life.

THE MAY-DAY OF THE WORLD.

HARK, O hark! 'tis the children's song,
Bursting sweet and clear,
Too happy to walk—they dance along,
And music breaks from each merry tongue
While they hail, with chorus soft yet strong
The May-Day of the year.

Hail, Queen May, in thy primrose crown,
 Gemmed with snow-drops clear ;
 Life leaps wherever thy step goes down,
 Flowers spangle the old earth's bosom brown,
 Thou breathest joy through village and town,
 O May-Day of the year.

A white-haired Pilgrim, sad and lorn,
 Shook the dewdrops clear
 From his bed beneath the wayside thorn,
 And muttered :—" Would I had ne'er been born !
 There cometh, to hearts all blighted and torn,
 No May-Day of the year."

Forth stepped a Boy, whose radiant brow
 Shone like noontide clear :—
 " Oh ! hark ye, my merry playmates, now,
 Let each a bit of his cake allow,
 And we'll show this white-haired Pilgrim, how,
 May-Day comes to his year."

Forth stepped a Girl, whose golden hair
 Wave-like streamed and curled ;
 She gathered from each the old man's share ;—
 Weeping he took it, and called her fair,
 Then hailed, with a cry of hope and prayer,
 The May-Day of the World.

All hail brave Boys and Girls divine,
 Clear-browed, golden-curved ;
 When love shall all human hearts entwine—
 And Christ through all human actions shine—
 Then cometh, despite lorn hearts like mine,
 The May-Day of the world.

Hark, O hark ! how the children sing,
 Clear-browed, golden-curved ;—
 Pure Faith, sweet Hope, in each bosom spring
 O Charity, thrill each warm heart-string !
 And bear us a Race, who shall glory to bring
 The May-Day of the world.

To the student—no matter how happy his lodgment in city quarters—a letter from the old home is ever welcome, and the box that often follows on the heels of the missive is a much-prized gift ; every separate article reminding the youth of the love and care that lies in the heart of the good mother, whose hands had made up the love-gift. These lines by Mr. Paton form a true picture :

NEW YEAR'S BOX FROM HOME.

A Student's letter to his Mother in acknowledgment of a Box full of
New Year's Gifts.]

YER welcome Letter cam' the nicht—
It made my young Heart dance fu' licht,
And aff I pranced wi' meikle nicht
And ran like stoure,
That I might get it—a' things richt—
That verra 'oor !

Glib gab glowered wi' starin' een,
I held oot a han' lang. grubbin', lean—
I paid him doon the tippence clean
And grudged it na' :
The Parcel shure—wi' struttin' mien
I hied awa'.

My ready knife, wi' thunderin' whack,
Gart string and strappings a' play crack ;
But, when I pood the coverin' back,
And saw the ploy,
My wordy tongue did wisdom lack
To speak its joy.

But, by this han', I wasna lame
In tirlin' oot its inmost frame :
I felt what here I wunna name—
For ance or twice
The big roon tears doon tricklin' came—
And may be thrice !

The wee bit parcels, ticht and bonnie,
A' wrapt and strapt fu' neat and cannie—
They mind't me o' my auld kind Minnie,
Soul-stirrin' Name !
How she forgets na' her young Hinnie,
When far frae Hame.

The Vittals were the verra best ;
And, no a whit ahint the rest,
I had a rantin' New-Year's feast
Wi' mirth and glee ;
I envied na' the belted Priest,
Nor Holy See.

But had ye seen my reekin' table
When glorious Tam * lay like a cable ;
I said a grace wi' aspect sable,
As weel's I could,

* "Tam" is a name, in the South of Scotland, for the principal Pudding, to which is given the place of honour, second after the Haggis.

Then slew him like anither Abel
And drank his blood.

Wha baked the Scones—I needna' spier !
They grace wi' credit my New-Year,
And every time I toast yer cheer
I grist a new ane ;
Their ain inherent worth, I fear,
Will be their ruin.

In 1881, he published "Lays of the Scotch Worthies," Part First, but has never completed the ambitious programme there outlined. The "Literary World" and other distinguished journals praised this work highly; but, strangely enough, Mr. Paton has allowed all his volumes of poetry to be out of print for some years now without attempting a re-issue, in collected form, of the best of these effusions, which, we feel sure, would meet with an encouraging demand.

Mr Paton's truly monumental work, as a purely personal effort, distinct from the editing of his brother's Autobiography, is his "British History and Papal Claims." It occupies two large library volumes, and is the essence of Cobbett's "Parliamentary History" and Hansard's "Parliamentary Debates," these comprising, in all, 500 huge volumes of authoritative material. It consists really of four books, covering the period from the Norman conquest to the present day, and treats, at first-hand, of these themes:—I.—The Struggle for Supremacy, A.D. 1066-1603; II.—The Stuart Re-action, 1603-1688; III.—The Revolution Settlement, 1688-1702; and IV.—The Modern Re-action, 1702-1892. It was at once pronounced "The standard Protestant work on the subject" by the most competent critics and scholars.

JOHN D. REID.



John D. Reid
(Kaleidoscope.)

JOHN DOUGALL REID was born over thirty-five years ago in Glasgow, and in this city he received his first impressions of life. Mr. Reid's own name will have a literary flavour only to the few, but his *nom de plume* of "Kaleidoscope" appeals to a mass of readers, and recalls the pleasure derived from his stories and poems, always crisp, and bright, and smart. While he was still a child his parents went to Liverpool, but they did not reside there long. His father was a marine engineer in the employ of the Cunard Company, which firm required him to remove to the port on the Mersey. But they had not been long in Liverpool before the father died, and the widow brought

her children back to her mother's house in Springburn. It was from under his grandmother's roof that John went to the Glasgow Normal School to receive instruction in the elements of learning. He was not long at that school, however, till he came to another turn in the winding stream of life. A wealthy widowed aunt of his, Mrs. Dougall by name, took a fancy to the boy, and adopted him. She lived in Helensburgh, and John was sent to the parish school, where, under the tuition of Mr. Fraser, he learned rapidly. This teacher seems to have had the power of winning the affections and attention of his pupils, and Mr. Reid still retains for him the warmest regard.

School days passed without any incident worthy of note, and in the course of time the troublesome question "What shall I be?" faced the lad and his guardian. They gave opposite answers to that important query. Mrs. Dougall wished her adopted son to choose a profession. John, however, was of a different mind. He wished to follow in his father's footsteps, and become a marine engineer. His aunt opposed the idea so strongly that he was compelled to give it up, and as a compromise he became apprentice to a draper in Helensburgh. The compromise was not a success. The dull routine of business behind a counter had no charm for the poetic youth, whose quick imagination was already awakened into life by the romantic beauty of the scenery around Helensburgh, the changing loveliness of the coast, and the majestic sweep of the river on which great ships pass and return to and from all lands.

Though gaining little from his training as a draper, our subject was all the time developing himself after his own fashion. He wandered among the hills and glens of the district, or strolled along the shores of the Firth, filling his imagination with the beauty of nature. The experiences of this portion of Mr. Reid's life have been oftentimes happily reproduced in delightful short stories, dealing with life on the West Coast. Books attracted him strongly, and he eagerly read everything he could lay hands upon.

At the expiry of his apprenticeship, he changed from one part of the country to the other, in various situations as a draper's salesman. Seldom did he stay longer in one place than six months, the innate restlessness of his disposition

leading him to seek constant change. Whilst employed in Falkirk he made his first attempt at verse. It took the form of a sonnet, and was found unsuitable, the editor saying that if there *was* any meaning in the lines, it was too deep for ordinary mortals, and advised the budding poet to study English Composition.

At length he returned to his home in Helensburgh with a view to adopting some trade more congenial to his tastes, but while on this visit his good aunt and he "fell out," and the young man turned his back on home once more.

London was his next location, and there he contrived to see enough of the rough side of life to furnish material for two or three "Infernos," supposing another Dante required them. Tired of this hopeless existence he enlisted at St. George's Barracks, London, for the Highland Brigade, in the 78th Ross-shire Buffs. He was then twenty-two years of age.

Wild and rough though barrack life was, he liked it. He joined under the short service system, and during the seven years he served in the line it was his lot to travel in many parts of the world. First in the ranks of the 71st H.L.I.—then linked to the 78th—he visited in turn all the stations on the Mediterranean; then when war seemed imminent between Russia and this country, his regiment was ordered to Cyprus in order to "stiffen" the brigade from India. There, he says, "in spite of heat and dirt, thirst and fever, and flies, I enjoyed myself amazingly, and left the island with regret." He then spent fifteen months in that impregnable British fortress, Gibraltar, and was afterwards sent home to Edinburgh Castle. The first production of his pen that appeared in print was written in a barrack-room in the Castle. It was entitled "That Dog," and was published in the *People's Friend*. Two weeks after that sketch appeared, and when he had only been about a year in the Scottish capital, he was ordered out to India to join his own regiment, the 78th, at Poona.

While in India he kept up his literary correspondence, and wrote various articles, such as "Chuff," "Guard-room Inn," etc. "The Last Shot, a Legend of the Indian Mutiny," a bold dramatic poem from his pen, is descriptive of an incident told the author while his regiment lay at Cawnpore,

by an old moonshee, a native schoolmaster. This poem, with Mr. Reid's permission, has been inserted in "Garry's Elocutionist," and other collections, and is now a much appreciated item in the *repertoire* of elocutionists, finding a place on social programmes of our best literary and dramatic associations.

After some years' service in our great Eastern empire he was transferred into the ranks of the reserves, and so closed his active military career.

Back to Scotland again, he spent some six months seeing about him, and at the end of that period obtained a situation with Messrs. Napier in their engineering works on the Clyde. All this time he was steadily pursuing his literary labours, and gaining a name as a writer of original ability, and was at length induced to quit the workshop to join the staff of *The Dundee Evening Telegraph*. While in Dundee he wrote for the columns of *The People's Journal*, four serials, entitled "An' Awfu' Lassie," "Ailie's Bairn," "A Rose o' Doon," and "The Bullers o' Buchan." He left that employment some years ago, and now derives his income as a literary free-lance.

In the columns of *The Glasgow Weekly Citizen*, 17th October, 1885, appeared a story from Mr. Reid's pen entitled "Sykes, Junior." It was followed by others, such as "Sal," "Fool or Hero," etc., all of them racy and original in style.

What is considered by many to be one of his best short stories, is "The Message of the Bells." Mr. Reid's interpretation of the sound of the Christmas chimes as they carried their sweet message of "Peace on earth, goodwill towards men," reads like an anthem in prose, which, if it be not set to music, teems with musical cadences in every line.

Mr. Reid does his work, to use a military phrase of his own, "in rushes." He cannot set himself down to cover so many pages of paper per day; on the contrary, some of his best work, notably "The Message of the Bells" and "Sykes, Junior" were done in the sma' 'ooors o' the mornin'" at one sitting, and when the imagination was, as it were, at white heat.

His work is always genuine, and bears the impress of the earnest thinker. He says, "I think that in literature the first object aimed at in working—not the reason for working

that is a different thing—should be the excellence of the work itself.

Mr. Reid is, besides, one of our minor poets, and has written verses that have placed him in an honoured position in our gallery of West Country bards. The verses we quote contain a strong vein of every day philosophy, working up to a healthy moral in the concluding lines.

WHILES.

BIRLIN' at feckless Fortune's wheel,
 Mony a skelp frae the hizzie gettin',
 Chasin' success an' joukin' the deil—
 Lauchin' greetin' joyin' frettin'.
 We see ilk day gang snoovin' us by,
 An' ne'er our mou' gets felicity's kiss ;
 Till whiles we learn or we come to die
 That the best o' philosophy's simply this—

Lauch when ye can, greet when ye maun,
 Tak' what ye get in the wife ye marry ;
 What's won or ye rest enjoy wi' the best,
 For what ye hae lost ye haena to carry.

When a man's ta'en a header in folly's well,
 Just think or ye ca' him a' kin's o' an ass,
 How ye'd feel to meet sic mischanter yoursel'—
 A thing that may easily come to pass.
 It mends na brunt heid to crack the croon,
 An' there's times when e'en virtue's kick sud miss ;
 An' whiles we learn or we're happit doon
 That the best o' humanity's simply this—

Help when you can, be 't beast or man,
 Keep aye a calm sough to the wife ye marry ;
 What ye hae gi'en may gain ye a frien',
 An' the curses ye lose ye haena to carry.

An' whether 't be held owre the heels in love,
 Or whether 't be up to the lugs in debt,
 Ca' cannily through ; to sprauchle and shove
 Ne'er helpit a saunt or a sinner yet.
 Though the tane's to win in an' the tither win oot,
 The aim o' them baith is bent on bliss ;
 An' while's we learn, or life's whamm'lt aboot,
 That the best o' baith warld's is simply this—

Haud by the richt, look aye for the licht,
 Rest on the love o' the wife ye marry ;
 Endure an' dare, an' God will tak' care
 That your burden is never owre heavy to carry.

In quite another vein but equally clever are his lines—

THE REIVER'S LASS.

SHE had meikle to haud an' mair to hide
 Frae kith an' kin an' a' ;
 She had lang to greet thro' ilk nicht-tide
 When her true love rade awa.

Wi'—"Winna ye trust me, lassie true?
 An' winna ye trust my name?
 The sword has taen me awa frae you,
 But your love will bring me hame."

He had laid a kiss on her mou' sae sweet,
 He had twined a rose in her hair,
 An' aye she heard her heart repeat
 When her breist was sabbin' sair—

"Oh, winna ye trust him, lassie true?
 An' winna ye trust his name?
 The sword has taen him awa frae you,
 But your love will bring him hame."

Her kin they waled her a richer man,
 An' bade her busk for a bride ;
 But aye she turned as the tale began,
 For love cried oot at her side—

"Oh, winna ye trust him, lassie true?
 An' winna ye trust his name?
 The sword has taen him awa frae you
 An' your love maun bring him hame."

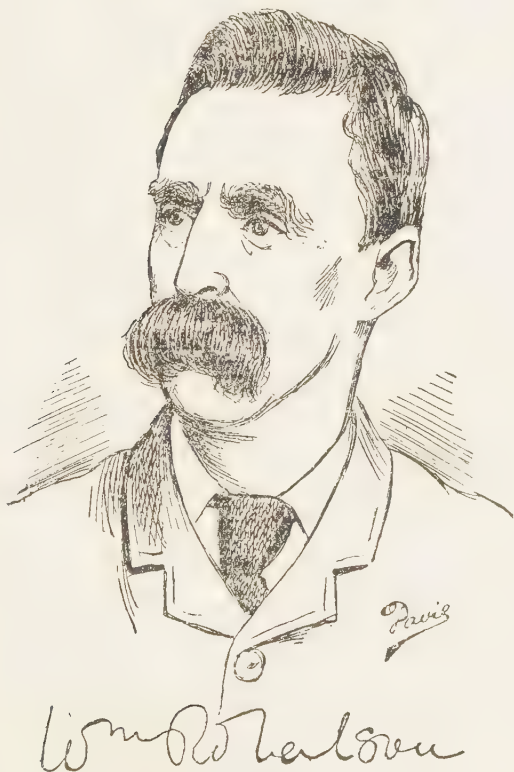
But there cam' a day that was ill an' drear,
 An' there cam' a bird on the wing,
 An' it spak' o' a fray on a field o' fear,
 An' it grat when it tried to sing.

"Oh, weel ye hae trusted him, lassie true !
 Oh, weel ye hae trusted his name !
 But the sword has taen him awa' frae you,
 An' ye canna bring him hame."

Low down she lay on the grass sae green,
 An' death cam' quick at her cry ;
 An' he kissed her mou' an' he closed her e'en
 An' he heard her wa'-gaun sigh—

"Oh, I hae trusted my love sae true,
 An' I hae trusted his name ;
 The sword has done a' the sword can do,
 An' love has taen us hame."

WILLIAM ROBERTSON.



I N an August, about the year 1784, Robert Burns, who had begun to feel that power which burned within his soul like an inextinguishable light, wrote in his common-place book the following words,—“ However I am pleased with the works of our Scotch poets, particularly the excellent

Ramsay, and the still more excellent Fergusson yet I am hurt to see other places of Scotland, their towns, rivers, woods and haughs, etc., immortalised in such celebrated performances, whilst my dear native country, the ancient Baileries of Carrick, Kyle, and Cunningham, famous both in ancient and modern times for a gallant and warlike race of inhabitants—a country where civil and particularly religious liberty have ever found their first support, and their last asylum—a country, the birthplace of many famous philosophers, soldiers, and statesmen, and the scene of many important events recorded in history, particularly a great many of the actions of the glorious Wallace, the saviour of his country : yet we have never had one Scotch poet of any eminence to make the fertile banks of Irvine, the romantic woodlands and sequestered scenes on Ayr, and the healthy mountainous source, and winding sweep of Doon, emulate Tay, Forth, Ettrick, and Tweed.” And, while Burns never became the high-priest of nature like Thomson or Wordsworth,—he was rather the poet of the people,—he lived to immortalise his native Ayrshire, not so much by his descriptions of that district, as by the fact that there lived the prototype of his grandest creation “The priest-like father,” the centre-piece of his inimitable picture—“The Cottar’s Saturday Night :” that by her streams he had wandered with his beloved Jean, and that while guiding the plough on her fields he had composed his never dying verses, till—

“ now he haunts his native land
As an immortal youth ; his hand
 Guides every plough,
He sits beside each ingle nook ;
His voice is in each rushing brook,
 Each rustling bough,”

and, to the stranger from foreign parts, the tour of Scotland is not considered complete till the traveller has visited Scott’s Borderland and Burns’s Ayrshire.

To think of Ayrshire, then, is to think of Mount Oliphant and Mossgiel, of Tarbolton and Mauchline, and we are apt to forget the wealth of history that lies behind these times in which the poet lived, when Ayrshire was the arena of many a fierce feud and bloody encounter between the rival Mont-

gomerie and Cuninghames, the Craufurds and Kennedys, and others.

To Mr. William Robertson of Ayr, the reader of the present day is largely indebted for much of his information regarding these ancient times, and that writer may, with every justice, be termed the historian of Ayrshire.

His works give indisputable evidence of a vast amount of painstaking research, and the various tales, legendary and authenticated, are reproduced in an extremely lucid and sympathetic style. In his "*Tales and Legends of Ayrshire*," he recalls to memories' eye many a scene of wild foray and deathly struggle.

The sight of Annick Water recalls to mind the spot where the youthful Earl of Eglinton was butchered in cold blood by the revengeful Cuninghames at the instigation of that modern Jael, the Lady of Langshaw, who, though she had married a Montgomerie had still retained in rancorous-keep the vengeful spirit of her own family, the rival Cuninghames. Stretching our eyes across the waters of the Firth, past that grim sentinel of the waters—Ailsa Craig, and beyond Arran, with its rugged silhouetted peaks aflame with the golden glory of the sunset as the disappearing orb dips below the sky line, we catch a glimpse of the Kintyre coast, and this brings to mind the story of King Alpin whose avaricious eye led him to cross the sea, and, passing through South Ayrshire into Galloway, he bit the dust by dark Dunaskin Glen. We look on the crumbling ruins of Dunure Castle, one of the many remnants of old-time "Keeps" that stud the Ayrshire coast, which, it is said, was stormed and taken possession of by the original Kennedy,—the progenitor of the Marquis of Ailsa's family—at the battle of Largs in 1263, and the blackened stones retell of that diabolical act, "The roasting of the Commendator of Crossraguel," by the Earl of Cassilis in the black vault of the stronghold in the autumn of 1570. In relief from this gruesome story we have an account of a fierce fight that was the outcome of a challenge thrown in the very teeth of the then powerful Craufurds by their bitter enemies the Kennedys. There is a spice of humour attached to this old story, for the gauntlet that was thrown down took the form of a sow, and the objectionable feature of that savoury animal (when

roasted) was the fact that a message was sent by the bold Bargany, the head of the house of Kennedy, to the old Laird of Kerse, the then chief of the Craufurds, that "when morning breaks on Lammas Day, he will tether a sow upon the lands of Kerse, and deil a man of Kyle shall flit her." Ludicrous as may seem the terms of the challenge, it was enough to rouse the fiery spirit of the old feudalist, Kerse, and "To boot and saddle" was the order for Lammas Morn. The veteran was himself too frail to lead his men in the struggle, but he was with them in desire and feeling, and Mr. Robertson's imaginative description of the aged yeoman's mental struggles as he followed his men in spirit throughout that day, the while he sat impatiently waiting the result, is well worth reading.

Mr. William Robertson comes of a clerical family. As has already been stated, he is a native of Ayr, where he was born somewhat between forty and fifty years ago. He is the son of a worthy sire, the late Rev. John Robertson, once a familiar and respected figure in the "Auld Toon," the *father* of the Original Secession Church, and who, on the attainment of his ministerial jubilee, was the recipient of a handsome testimonial subscribed to by many well-wishers and admirers outside the church and denomination with which he was connected. He died in the summer of 1894.

Mr. Robertson's only and elder brother was up till nine years ago the minister of the Original Secession Church in Kilwinning, at which time he embarked for Australia, and is now pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Victoria.

When but a lad of sixteen, Mr. William Robertson was engaged on the staff of the *Ayrshire Express* as a reporter. Two years later he received an appointment as sub-editor of the *Aberdeen Herald*, and at a lapse of other two years he was engaged as one of the sub-editors of the *Daily Review*, with Mr. Henry Kingsley as chief. A roving spirit seems to have possessed the mind of our subject soon after, for we learn that his next step took him on board a barque bound for Australia, when he was one year away, working before the mast as an ordinary seaman.

He next shipped for Callao in a vessel that seems to have been anything but seaworthy, and the experiences Mr. Robertson went through during the twenty months he was

on board that hulk could provide ample material for a few romances of the Clark-Russel type. Though he landed in a very weak state of health after this voyage, the love of adventure had not died within him, for afterwards he made two voyages to Quebec and Montreal, one voyage up the Mediterranean, and last of all, he made a run out to Calcutta and home, arriving here with the rank of quartermaster.

It is remarkable what insignificant events alter the current of one's life. In the year 1875, while waiting the recovery from illness of a shipmate, who was to accompany him to Cape Town *en route* for the diamond fields, Mr. Robertson was asked to fill up a temporary vacancy on the *Ayr Observer*, and there he found himself agreeably situated for five years, after which time, in 1880, he started the *Ayrshire Post*, over the destinies of which paper he continued to preside till the year 1886, when *The Post* became the property of a Limited Liability Company; Mr. Robertson retaining the editorship.

Since then Mr. Robertson has largely employed his working hours in the pursuit of literature, and that these have not been idle moments the following particulars will amply demonstrate.

In 1886 he published, through Mr. Thomas D. Morison of this city, "The Kings of Carrick: a Historical Romance of the Kennedys of Ayrshire;" the first edition of which was sold out in so short a time as to afford ample gratification to both author and publisher. "Whauphill: a tale of the Disruption," came from the press of Mr. James Gemmell, Ayr, in 1888. The following year his valuable work, "Historical Tales and Legends of Ayrshire," was sent out by Mr. Morison, Glasgow; in 1891 Mr. Alexander Gardner, of Paisley, published "The Lords of Cuninghame," while Messrs. Thomson Brothers, of Edinburgh, issued volume I. of "Historic Ayrshire," being a collection of the historical works treating of the county of Ayr. This last was the precursor of other valuable quartos dealing with an extensive and important branch of Scottish history.

Besides all this Mr. Robertson has added a substantial quota to serial fiction. In 1889 a story from his pen entitled, "Jeanie Hay: a Tale of Ayrshire Smuggling Days," ran in the columns of the *Glasgow Weekly Mail*, which was

followed by "Tom Burns ; a Nithsdale Poaching Story," and "Nina Kennedy ; or the Black Vault of Dunure" appeared in the *People's Journal*. His latest effort in this direction was the story of "Johnnie Faa," which appeared this year in the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*.

As will be seen from the titles of the various tales the historic in literature is Mr. Robertson's favourite study, and it is markedly his special sphere. He is also well-known throughout his native county as a popular lecturer ; "Four Years before the Mast," being the favourite subject, alike with lecturer and audience. With a good chorus of singers to render the sea-songs, with which the lecturer is interspersed, a most agreeable couple of hours may be enjoyed. He also takes the platform with Ayrshire and general historic subjects.

Over and above all this there is another phase to be added to the many-sided character of Mr. Robertson, and which has hitherto been known only to a few.

For some months in 1891 the readers of *Quiz* were intensely amused by the recital of the varied and humorous experiences of the quaint and pawky "Anera M'Dougall," the chronicler of "The Annals of Drumsudden." And while there is unmistakable evidence here and there throughout Mr. William Robertson's historical romances that the writer is not without a strong vein of wit and sarcasm, few would couple the authorship of these resuscitated tales of old times with the portrayal of simple village life and its colouring of happy fun and quaint drollery, as pictured in these weekly letters that are said to emanate from that "Sleepy Hollow" bearing the not too classical name of "Drumsudden." We can imagine that the writing of these "Annals" would come as a pleasing relief, a kind of escape-valve, for the author of such solid and valuable work as is to be found in Mr. Robertson's goodly array of publications.

REV. THOMAS SOMERVILLE, M.A.



Thomas Somerville

GLASGOW has been blessed in the number of its historians and in the variety of the attainments of the men whose pens have portrayed its many-sided and interesting characteristics. The story has been told by teacher and lawyer, journalist and clergyman, corporation official and antiquarian. One writer confines himself to the ecclesiastical features of its history, another deals with its clubs, while its "characters" draw forth the garrulous and entertaining

memories of a third, and the dry, though valuable statistical facts in our municipal history appeal to another.

Some treated the matter like Mr. Mackenzie, in a chatty reminiscent way, while others brought the matter of fact style of the historian to bear on the subject.

One of our latest historians, the Rev. Thomas Somerville, has had his imagination stirred, and his interest in the chronicles of St. Mungo's city awakened as he passed and repassed through our magnificent square. Not inappropriately, his volume takes its title therefrom, and in "George Square ; and the Lives of those whom its Statues Commemorate," we have a most interesting book.

It is well within the fitness of things that the minister of Blackfriars Parish should be specially interested in the history of our ancient city. His church represents, through a long line of succession, the sacred edifice which went by the same name, and which was the property of the Black Friar Dominicans, whose convent was near to the church. According to Dr. Gordon the Black Friars were settled in Glasgow about the middle of the thirteenth century.

The successor of the old Black Friar Church was named the Blackfriars or College Church. It was erected in the year 1699, and was opened for public worship on Sunday, the 18th day of January, 1702.

The extension and improvement of our city led to the removal of the old college buildings and the erection of our handsome University which overlooks the Kelvin, and the same cause led to the demolition of the College Church, when the congregation moved eastward, adopting for their handsome new edifice the more ancient title.

The Reverend Thomas Somerville is a native of Kilbarchan, the birthplace of many a sturdy, radical weaver, a class of men who, in bygone times, exercised a decided power and influence in the political life of their day.

Mr. Somerville's first ministerial experiences were gained in St. James's Parish Church, Glasgow, where he was for some time assistant. He was ordained about thirty-two years ago to the pastorate of the Scotch Church in British Columbia, where he spent five busy and profitable years of his life. His experiences of that time helped to broaden his views, and, his eye ever open to the impressions of the hour,

he has been able to reproduce by his pen, the nature and characteristics of the country in which he then dwelt. Coming back to Scotland he was appointed to a charge in Kirkintilloch, at which place he remained for two years. He then, at the invitation of the Glasgow town council—who exercised their right of patronage for the last time—became minister of the College Church in High Street.

Mr. Somerville, as a preacher, speaks to his hearers in a pleasant, chatty way, that is not without its charm, and which accords well with his manner when you meet him in his study or on the street. He is the most approachable of men, is, in fact, everybody's guide, philosopher and friend, knowing no sect or creed but the brotherhood of man, hence his popularity with the folks of the district. No one wonders that he is sometimes termed "the Minister of Dennistoun." Of a truth, any district would be too circumscribed for the catholicity of heart and soul that characterises the reverend gentleman.

Although Blackfriars Church, as already stated, is now situated in the east, Mr. Somerville's active sympathies—as also those of many of the members of his congregation—are daily in evidence around the locality contiguous to the site of the old College Kirk, where, at their Havannah Mission Station, a good work, on Evangelical, Sabbath School, and Band of Hope lines, is being carried on.

Mr. Somerville is no tyro in the paths of literature. He has written for *Harper's Monthly*, *Chambers's Journal*, and *Leisure Hour*, as well as being an occasional contributor to various influential newspapers. Twenty-five years ago his little pamphlet—"A day in Henry Ward Beecher's Church" sold exceedingly well, and was to be seen on every bookstall. It is graphically written, and gives unmistakeable evidence of the author's powers as a descriptive writer.

Should any citizen of Glasgow desire to shew the stranger within our gates evidence of the great prosperity of our city, he cannot place himself on better vantage ground than in "George Square."

Stepping into the entrance hall of our palatial Municipal Buildings, the sight of the magnificent marble staircase, recalls the ancient prototype, the old Tolbooth at the foot of the High Street. A glance at the South side

of the Square creates a comparison with our Post Office as it now appears, and the little place in Princes Street of last century, with its rental of £7, and the postmaster who was recompensed with £30 per annum.

Looking westward our eye falls on the fine building belonging to the Bank of Scotland, and the Bridgegate, with its Ship Bank is recalled in the association of ideas, as is also the old-time "Gild Hall," which, too, stood in the Bridgegate and was the Merchants' House of earlier times.

The ponderous tones, and heavy style of that great man, Samuel Johnson, strike the ear in fancy, as we view the north side of the Square with its great hotels, and compare these with the famous *Saracen's Head*—the old building still stands on the north side of the Gallowgate, 'twixt Great Dovehill and Saracen Lane—where the great lexicographer put up for several days, accompanied by his faithful friend and immortaliser, Boswell.

This historical old inn, was built on the site of the "Old Yaird, a Burying-Place called Little Saint Mungo," and the builder was granted full permission, by the magistrates of that time (1754), to use the stones from the ruins of the Bishop's Castle at the Cathedral.

In the chapter of Mr. Somerville's volume entitled, "Victoria and Albert," we have an interesting sketch of the history of our own time. Other statues in the Square suggest feelings of pride and admiration, in that Glasgow can claim as her sons such brave, true, and noble soldiers as Sir John Moore and Lord Clyde, such honourable merchant princes as Thomas Graham and James Oswald, such poetic genius as was to be found in Thomas Campbell. To the memory of those famous sons of Scotia, bright particular stars, each, in their own sphere, Sir Walter Scott, Robert Burns, James Watt, and David Livingstone, we have raised monuments that testify to the appreciation and regard with which their names are held by all true citizens of the Second City of the Empire.

All these thoughts, and much more, is suggested by a perusal of "George Square," hence the ready sale of the book: and to sons of Glasgow, at home or abroad, the contents have a valuable historical interest.

SHERIFF SPENS, LL.D.



Walter J. Spens

DURING this century both bench and bar have contributed not a few men of letters who have brought credit and renown to the West of Scotland. The century had run but a third of its course, when Mr. Archibald Alison—who, though born within the walls of a sequestered Shropshire vicarage, was the scion of an old Scottish family—came to Glasgow to preside over the

Sheriff-courts of Lanarkshire, and in after years was better known as Sir Archibald Alison, the historian of Europe. Two years later, in 1837, George Outram, the author of "The Annuity, and other Legal Lyrics," who was born near Glasgow in the year 1805, relinquished his position as an advocate at the bar of the Parliament House in Edinburgh, and returned to the city of his birth to assume the editorial management of the *Glasgow Herald*. That same year (1805) a child first saw the light within a Glasgow dwelling, who, in later years lent a lustre to his natal town, through his championship of Scotland's beautiful but unfortunate Queen by his world-known verses which depict in advancing and receding scenes a life which opened with so fair a prospect, and which set in such a ruddy glare; and it is a noted fact, that while giving evidence of outstanding genius as a poet, no legal judgments were ever called less in question than the findings of Henry Glassford Bell, the late Sheriff of Lanarkshire. To-day we have a worthy representative of the bar, Mr. Robert Bird, who not only in his "Law Lyrics" but also in his now famous prose works "Jesus the Carpenter of Nazareth," and "Joseph the Dreamer," has given evidence of culture and talents of which we of the West are justly proud, and a glance at the bench reminds us that in Dr. Walter Cook Spens we have a worthy successor to the literary sheriffs who in days gone by adorned our judicial courts.

Sheriff Spens comes of an old Fifeshire family, the Spenses of Lathallan. He was born in Glasgow in the year 1842, and is the second son of the late William Spens, manager of the Scottish Amicable Life Assurance Society. He received his primary education in the Glasgow Academy, after which he attended both the Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities. He was called to the bar in the year 1865, and, five years later, was appointed by the late Sheriff Glassford Bell one of the Sheriff-substitutes of Lanarkshire, in which capacity he presided at the Court in Hamilton for six years, when he was promoted to the Glasgow Court.

In 1863, just when he had attained his majority, he published his first volume of verse under the title of "Dreams and Realities." The volume was dedicated to his father, whom he ever held in beloved reverence.

A writer in speaking of this same volume said that Mr. Spens was essentially a love poet. A glance at the following stanza, taken from a poem which appears in the book entitled "My first last love," will give ample justification for that expression of opinion. There is a fine delicacy of expression in these lines that is fitly wedded to the faint blush of the rose which flits across the fair face of beauty :—

Who can the glory of her smile portray ?
A rippling smile, so softly, calmly bright,
The impress of the Heavens' purity
Linking the finite with the infinite,
A gleam of her all-stainless soul's own light,
First glinting round her lips, then gradually
It plays o'er her whole face dissolvingly,
And leaves, when fading, to the longing sight,
A memory as sweet as to the ear
Her pure contralto's tear up-bringing might,
That is so deep, yet ever is so clear—
Their recollection floods my heart to-night,
And both to me are perilously dear !
Why should I be afraid? Love casts out fear.

In these lines the young poet of twenty-one found the flood-tide of his poetic expression, and this stanza from these poems of "the youth that fled to-day" needs not the disparaging thought of his dedication, when he says, "I rate lightly their innate worth."

In the year 1881 Sheriff Spens published through Mr. David Douglas, Edinburgh, a second volume of verse, entitled "Darroll and Other Poems." "Darroll, a Metrical Romance," which gives the title to the book, is told in such a clear, lucid style, and with such a rare command of liquid flowing rhythm as to make it a matter for regret that the author has not given us more of the narrative form in verse. As in a well-told story, the author never wanders far from the theme of his romance, and once the spirit or scope of the tale is caught, the reader pursues with great interest till its finish, what seems a faithful picture of life in the higher social circles. "A Strange Love-Letter," which forms the succeeding item in the volume shows the author has thought out and understood the feelings of doubt and uncertainty which sweep across the soul of every man and woman who has given more than a passing thought to the things of time

and of eternity. Did this poem admit of part-quotation, we should have given the reader some idea of the picture as drawn by the poet when simple faith comes to the speaker's aid, and—

Scales, as 'twere, fell from his soul's clouded view.

No poem in the volume appeals more to the inmost feelings of the heart than the lines written by the Sheriff in memory of his father. The man whose sweetest, bitterest memory is to recall the past, when he could look with filial love and reverence on the bent form, crowned with locks of honoured grey, and call that one "Father," and who can read the lines which follow and whose eyes be not dimmed with a flood of tearful memory is a poor son of an honourable sire.

For ah ! how good and gentle was his life !
 He never selfish or unjust thoughts knew !
 His was the voice that seemed to still all strife ;
 His the calm face the stainless soul looked through
 All unpolluted by an evil thought
 By the world's blackness, and its cark and care ;
 His was the heart at which full many sought
 Help, strength, and comfort, and who found them there.

Intensely honourable ! pure in heart !
 Incapable of meanness or of guile !
 When those who should be friends would stand apart,
 He smoothed the way, and loved to reconcile !
 A mind of lofty vigour, ever wise
 In counsel for another's temporal weal !
 The soul of chivalry ! and in his eyes
 And on his brow had Truth impressed her seal !

How merciful he was ! and when there came
 Those who had wronged him, freely he forgave !
 Nor sinners did he ever harshly blame,
 But, judging not, he rather thought to save,
 Saying, no man the force could estimate
 Of the temptation under which they fell ;
 Envy and malice, spite, revenge, and hate,
 What these things were, I deem, he could not tell.

The improvement of the social and moral condition of the people has ever been a subject to which Sheriff Spens has given a ready ear and a helping hand, and the following sonnet, in view of the deplorable condition of many tene-

ments in our city—which state of matters existed some years ago, though now much improved—will be read with interest.

The sonnet is entitled, “Let there be Light.”

PULL down the wretched rookeries where the air
Is thick and fetid and pollutes the breath ;
Within them lurk the withering germs of death,
And crouches crime in its accustomed lair.
There, children never lisped sweet childhood’s prayer,
Nor at a mother’s knee learn truth and faith,
But ere speech comes their souls reap deadly skait
Through things obscene that haunt them everywhere.
Health’s laws guard physical and moral life,
And dirt and sin are part of that same blight,
Which with the God of Nature is at strife
With fatal power to steep the soul in night.
Through both and each, alas ! disease is rife—
Sweep the foul dens away—“Let there be Light.”

Dr. Spens has written many legal works of value. In 1875 he published a work on “Jurisdiction and Punishments of Summary Criminal Courts.” The following year he wrote on the “Sanitary System of Scotland : its Defects, and Proposed Remedies,” and shortly after there came from his pen two treatises on “The Relief of the Able-bodied Poor, and as to the Law of Removal and Settlement.” He wrote in 1884 a “History of the Orr-Ewing Case,” and an essay on the conflict of jurisprudence between English and Scottish courts. In 1887, in conjunction with Mr. Younger, advocate, he published a work on the law of employer and employed as regards reparation for physical injury.

At the time of the City of Glasgow Bank disaster he wrote a series of articles on the liability of trustees, which excited considerable attention, and the views advocated at that time by the Sheriff were, almost without exception, endorsed by subsequent decisions in the Court of Session. He also published in the *Glasgow Herald* certain articles on criminal procedure, and the views then set forth were to a large extent given effect to in the Criminal Procedure Act of 1887. In the year 1888 Sheriff Spens wrote a long series of articles on small debt procedure and practice, which appeared in the columns of the *Evening Times*, and were much appreciated.

It surprised no one, but gave pleasure to all who knew the recipient of the honour, when, in 1889, our own univer-

sity conferred the honorary degree of LL.D., on Sheriff Spens.

As a member of the Glasgow Ballad Club he holds the esteem and respect of all who sit under the genial presidency of the poet Freeland, and it was with no small degree of pleasure that the old friend of David Gray proposed, some few years ago, on the death of Scotia's collier poet, that the position of vice-president of the club, so long associated with the honoured name of Wingate, should now be linked with the name of the club's sonneteer, Sheriff Spens.

As an authority on the game of chess the Sheriff stands very high. A writer says of him—"He is the most prominent figure in Scottish chess. Doubtless his position as a judge, as a poet, and as a man of letters, partly accounts for his influence among his chess-playing countrymen, but it is more largely due to his enthusiastic devotion to the game, and the keen, active interest which he takes in all that concerns its progress and development. Comparatively speaking, the Scotch do not seem to take kindly to chess, and no man has done so much to popularise the game amongst them as Sheriff Spens. . . . When a lad between seventeen and twenty, Spens played constantly with Sheriff Bell, first receiving the odds of a piece, and latterly on even terms. . . . The establishment of the Scottish Chess Association in 1884 was due to his initiation. Since 1882 he has conducted the popular chess column of the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*, to which he has contributed a large number of problems which have more than sustained the high reputation of the column for ability and originality. He has frequently been champion of the Glasgow Chess Club, and holder of the West of Scotland Cup. For the last twenty years he has been almost constantly an office-bearer in the Glasgow Club, frequently as president."

ANDREW STEWART.



yours sincerely
Andrew Stewart

TWELVE years ago "the highest lady in all the land" conferred the honour of knighthood on one who was termed Glasgow's Grand Old Man, when every son of St. Mungo, worthy of the name, bared the brow, and saluted with feeling of profoundest respect and deepest admiration, her christian philanthropist, and honoured citizen, Sir Michael Connal.

To the members of the Spoutmouth Bible Institute this action on the part of Her Majesty the Queen, came with special significance. So far back as the 10th of June, 1848, the humble room in Davidson's Court, Spoutmouth, was formally opened; and the little Sunday Class, which had met for several years under the roof of old Jean Murray, merged into the larger sphere of the "Spoutmouth Institute." The Sunday Class was ever the central effort in the good work carried on there by Sir Michael for so many years, but week-night classes were also held, where the young men could improve themselves in all subjects, from simple arithmetic to the classics. When this honour therefore came to their old teacher, the members, past and present, felt that such an occasion could not be allowed to pass without some special recognition on their part, and so they met and presented Sir Michael with a beautifully illuminated address.

Many old Spoutonians spoke that night of the good experienced in the old class-room, and no one struck a more heart-felt note of gratitude than the subject of our present article.

Born in the Gallowgate, Glasgow, within sound of the Cross-steeple bells, on the 11th September, 1842, Andrew Stewart's boyhood was spent in the very heart of the locality where Sir Michael Connal laboured, in order to educate and elevate the youth of the East-end. The Molindinar was then pretty much an open stream. Over the burn and along Blackfriar Street, he could view the old College Green, and, rounding the corner into High Street, he could watch the embryo divines and lawyers as they streamed in and out by the old College gate.

From the window of his father's house young Andrew could see every Sabbath the young men as they wended their way up the Spoutmouth, to sit at the feet of their guide, philosopher, and friend. By-and-bye he became fired with the resolution to become a member. At length his hopes were realised, and, as he said himself, the Institution had been to a large extent his school, and its members his school-mates. The instruction received in the Sabbath evening class had both deepened and elevated his spiritual nature.

To the Mutual Improvement Class he also owed a deep debt of gratitude for spurring him on his literary studies, and

helping to form that taste for literature which had been so serviceable to him in life ; and the attendance at the botany class making interesting and instructive every ramble he took in the woods, on the mountains, by the country-road, or the sea-shore.

His first situation was with Messrs. Lumsden & Sons, where he was employed for two years as feeder to a paper-ruling machine.

He then served an apprenticeship to the paper-ruling in Messrs. M'Corquodale's establishment. During that period he laboured assiduously to increase his knowledge, and, like a celebrated traveller in his youth, had his book attached to the machine under his charge, so that body and mind wrought with each other during the day, and at night, during his spare moments, his undivided attention was given up to self-culture. His apprenticeship over, he became foreman paper-ruler to Messrs. Wm. Collins & Sons. There he was one of the leading spirits in conducting a Manuscript Magazine, and it was these early efforts, we doubt not, that fired him with the ambition to write for the press.

As a friend said the other day, Mr. Stewart's contributions to the Mutual Improvement Syllabus at the Spoutmouth, always gave evidence of that "literary knack"—that something which makes a man's writing worthy of attention.

In the *People's Journal*, he had been successful more than once in the Christmas story competitions. He had also been in the habit of contributing verses and humorous sketches, regularly, to the same paper ; and, when *The People's Friend* was being started as a weekly miscellany—it was before that a monthly publication—Mr. Leng, the proprietor, sent for Mr. Stewart and offered him the sub-editorship. That occurred at the end of the year 1869, and the first week of 1870 saw him removed to Dundee, and at his duties under his chief, the late David Pae.

Mr. Stewart had not been long sub-editor of the *People's Friend* before he gave evidence of his versatility as a writer, for in the volume for 1871 appeared the earlier portions of his first serial story. It was entitled "James Harebell, or Righted at Last : a Tale of Love's Struggles, and Triumphs." Mixed up with the adventures of the hero of this story is

some autobiographical matter. His next serial—"The Sport of Fortune"—appeared in the volume for 1875; the hero of this tale being Thomas Muir, the Glasgow Radical advocate, who suffered banishment for his advanced opinions.

Four years later, Mr. Stewart wrote a serial for the columns of the *People's Journal* under the title of "The Dead Hand; or, Lost in the Arctic Regions," and "Wandering Willie: a Romance of the Tay Bridge Disaster," appeared in 1883.

The year 1876 saw the publication of his first attempt at compilation, and took the form of "The Scottish Cookery Book, suitable for Sma' Purses, Big Families, and Scotch Stomachs."

His next attempt in a similar direction, "The Thrifty Housewife; or, Plain Fare for Plain Folk," published three years later, has also met with an encouraging demand.

Paterfamilias seldom expect to see much good accrue from the hours spent by his own fireside amusing his children further than the pleasures derived by himself and the members of his own family, but Mr. Stewart has had the happy fortune of sharing these merry hours with many children besides his own. "Sangs for the Bairns" is a collection of nursery rhymes set to music; over three-fourths of the tunes being composed by the editor himself, and it has proved a very popular little collection.

A glance over one of Mr. Stewart's stories will give abundant proof of the possession on his part of genuine and spontaneous humour. Humorous readings have also formed an important part of his literary labours.

In 1881 he edited "Humorous Readings, Maistly Scotch," a most charming collection.

This was followed at intervals by "Readings; Humorous and Pathetic," "Comic Scotch Readings," and "Readings: Pithy and Pawky."

Within the last five years, Mr. Stewart has written for his own magazine some first-rate serial stories. "One False Step; or, the Registered Letter," appeared in 1886, and was well spoken of. Our own favourite, however, is "The Heir of Gryffe: a Story of Hawkie and Old Glasgow." The fact of the *locale* of the romance being familiar to us lends an extra attraction, but over and above that, there is a genuine interest running through the story from beginning to end

that holds the reader to the finish. Under a thin disguise we are able to discover the personality of a late highly-respected merchant in the Gallowgate, a member of the Society of Friends. The two conspicuous characters that figure so often in the course of the tale, Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair, are fine specimens of leal-hearted Scotch folks, battling at great odds against this world's trials and temptations, and yet keeping the lighthouse of rectitude always in view.

Hawkie, as the title indicates, forms a prominent feature, and to write up such a character with due consistency all through, is no mean test of a writer's powers of observation, and of his ability to describe "men: their manners and their ways."

"Joan of Arc; or, The Secret Compact," appeared also in the *People's Friend*, as well as a short, humorous serial, from Mr. Stewart's pen, entitled "The Woon' O't."

Two of his tales have appeared in book form. "Wandering Willie" was published by Messrs. John Menzies & Co., in 1887; besides being an interesting story, it contains an accurate history of that sad event, the Tay Bridge disaster.

"One False Step" was published lately by Messrs. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, Edinburgh. This story contains some good character sketches. Old Cameron, the meal merchant, is a well drawn portrait, and, we are sorry to admit it, his like may be met every day. A narrow minded, sanctimonious old hypocrite, who was a stickler for the form, entirely forgetting the spirit of Christ's teaching.

The author is good enough to say that these men act up to their light. We would scarcely deal so kindly with them. If a man draws down the blinds and shuts out the light, he can't complain if he finds himself in darkness. It is the conduct of such men that goes largely to fill the ranks of the non-church-going population, and Mr. Stewart did well to show up this phase of Scotch hypocrisy.

He has also written odd papers on various subjects. When a very young man his good old mother used to shake her head when she found Andrew interesting himself in such things as magic and mesmerism, but the *Friend* readers have reason to be thankful for these same by-studies of the editor; "Parlour Magic, with Home-made Apparatus," "Mesmerism and Hypnotism" being the titles

of some of the contributions from his pen. His holiday tours generally result in a descriptive sketch, accompanied by reproductions of photographs taken by himself—for Mr. Stewart is no mean student of this interesting science.

Had any of our readers been "up with the lark" on several of the bright clear mornings of August, 1888, they might have seen our present subject busy with his camera taking views of many of the old buildings around the classic locality of the "Sautmarket," and the Cross, and its vicinity. These views were all reproduced as illustrations of the serial story "The Heir of Gryffe; or, a Story of Hawkie and Old Glasgow."

The wonder is, considering the little leisure an editor can claim, not that Mr. Stewart should write so much that is both profitable and entertaining, but that he should find time to write at all.

ANDREW JAMES SYMINGTON.



WHEN, with a mutual friend, we first visited the subject of this sketch at his pleasant home in Langside, we were ushered into the library, a veritable temple of refinement and culture.

"Thou shalt not covet," were the words we heard faintly sounding from our conscience chamber as we glanced round the room. Here were literally *walls of books*, on literature, science, art, antiquity; containing presentation volumes from the Laureate, Tennyson, Charles Tennyson Turner, the Howitts, Samuel Lover, Emerson, Wendell Holmes, Whittier, Sir Henry Taylor, Carlyle, Ruskin, the Havergals, and many others.

Sculpture was represented by life-size busts of Homer, Dante, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Beethoven, while a shadow lay across the books on the writing-desk caused by a faithfully chiselled bust of the Rev. Prof. William Symington, D.D. (an uncle of our friend), which stood in the window.

Round the walls we could see traced, in choice engraving, photograph, or original drawing, the features of Carlyle, Tennyson, Sir Noel Paton, Ruskin, and others.

Every nook and corner was in requisition to find room for valuable curios. Mr. Symington showed us a bit of stone, a silicious deposit, from the lip of the Great Geyser, which he himself brought from Iceland, when there in 1859. On the table in front of us lies the Bible used by the Marquis of Argyle at his execution. There, under glass, is the pen with which Carlyle finished his work on "Frederick." Culloden is brought back through the mists of years as we examine an old silver-mounted knife, found on the battle field. Burns and his Highland Mary float before our mental vision as we handle a snuff-box made from the wood of the tree under which the Bard parted from her by

"The Castle o' Montgomery."

The while we are examining these and many other articles of interest, our host speaks of friends and correspondents, each memory finding tangible proof as he shows us, it may be, a dainty volume with the valued autograph on the title page, or points to a portrait of the late Professor Chadbourne, of William's College, Massachussets, with whom, Mr. Symington tells us in his "Pen and Pencil Sketches of Farøe and Iceland," he stood "on the brink of the Great Geyser, filled our glasses with its hot water—pure, and, as soon as it cooled down below the scalding point, drank to absent friends on both sides of the Atlantic." Every article in the room

has associations for its possessor, recalling to mind some incident of travel, or absent friend.

Our eye caught a very fine water-colour drawing that hung in front of some ancient tomes. It was the picture of the entrance hall. There was the table, bust of Bacon, etc., and in front stood a chubby little mite of two summers gazing intently at a clock above the table. The drawing is signed "A. S. Boyd"—a name well-known in literary and artistic circles in Glasgow—and we copied the poem, written by our host, that accompanies the picture, or rather, we should say, that the drawing illustrates. Here it is, dainty, and simple, and chaste:—

THE CUCKOO CLOCK.

HERE, in tempest or calm, the whole winter through,
We hear the blythe voice of the summer cuckoo.

By day and by night how the merry bird sings!
Comes forth, from its little door, flapping its wings.

Low bowing the head, with each note, while its beak
Keeps opening and shutting, as if it would speak.

Thus the clock in the hall makes gladsome the hours,
While it tells of green fields, woodland streams, and fair flowers.

To children, the bird is an endless delight;
"Cuckoo!" how they scamper off, just for the sight!

One dear little two-year-old girl, lately came
And asked, as a favour—pet Ina her name—

That I would, in paper, put up the cuckoo,
And give her the bird, to take home with her, too!

Ah! many would snatch, with less reason than she,
Life's fruitage and music, apart from their tree!

As we glanced round the room we thought of these words of Mr. Symington's, from his article "The Virtue of Refinement."

"Ornamentation and surroundings ought to be reposeful, suggestive of pleasing and elevating thought, and never be of such a character as to disturb, distract, or impede it. Let us, at least, have the well-selected plaster-cast; the choice engraving or photograph; the few cherished books we love to con, and the spray of gadding vine, drooping

from, and twining around the tall, slender, graceful taper glass, with golden light gleaming through its tender green leaves, as they tremble in the summer air, which steals in through the murmuring chords of the *Æolian* harp placed in the sill of the open window ; let us have trails and festoons of ivy : fragrant rose, mignonette, and basil-pots, with a profusion of cut-flowers ; also ‘ pale glistening shells,’ and other ‘ treasures of the deep,’ to remind us of old ocean. There must, of course, be a pianoforte—which is the soul of the furniture—and let it be open, smiling pleasantly with its white teeth, while suggesting Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn.”

Symington is an highly honoured name in the annals of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. The family came originally from Lanarkshire, near Tinto, and were a branch of the Douglasses. Espousing the cause of the Covenant, there were among them many earnest, God-fearing men, to whom liberty of conscience was as the breath of life. As already stated, the late Professor Wm. Symington, D.D., was an uncle of our present subject, and two sons of the Doctor followed worthily in the footsteps of their sire.

Andrew James Symington was born on the 27th July, 1825, at Paisley, a town that can show a long list of honoured sons.

Mr. Robert Brown Symington, his father, was a merchant, and after leaving the Grammar School of his native town, Andrew joined his brother in continuing his father’s business in Glasgow, but from which firm he retired a number of years ago, and since then has devoted his time and attention entirely to literary pursuits.

As early as his nineteenth year he gave evidence of his ability as a writer by contributing translations of German poetry and original verse to *Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine*. Since then the stream that has flowed from his pen has deepened and broadened with the experience and culture of years, in which heart and brain have wrought in loving and helpful sympathy.

In 1848 Mr. Symington published his first book, a volume of poems, entitled “ Harebell Chimes, or Summer Memories and Musings,” which attained a second edition in 1862.

In 1857 he produced, in two volumes, the labour of ten

years, "The Beautiful in Nature, Art, and Life." Two years later he visited Iceland, and the result of his travels and observations was given in "Pen and Pencil Sketches of Farøe and Iceland," the volume containing over forty illustrations, drawn by the author. A biographical work entitled "Thomas Chalmers—The Man, His Time and Work," was published in 1878, followed by "Thomas Guthrie—Preacher, Pastor, and Philanthropist."

Two years after, 1880, he engaged to edit Messrs. Blackie's "Men of Light and Leading," and for the series wrote the biographies of Samuel Lover, Thomas Moore, William Cullen Bryant, and Wordsworth. These have all since been republished in America.

What a capable critic has termed "these capital 'Hints to our Boys,'" came from the press in 1884; the volume having since gone into a second edition. Mr. Symington has written for many biographical works, including "The Poets and Poetry of Ireland," "Men of the Time," "The Biograph." And to "Appleton's Encyclopædia of American Biography" he has contributed no fewer than twenty-six lives.

"Some Personal Reminiscences of Carlyle," is the title of a little work from Mr. Symington's pen that, on its appearing in 1886, was warmly commended by the critics.

Under the modest title of "Poems," Mr. Alexander Gardner, in 1885, published a collection of Mr. Symington's principal contributions to the poetry of our country. "Sketches on Loch Lomond" is the title of a group of fine poetic etchings, beginning with realistically descriptive lines on "Kilmaronock," where, he says,

At Kilmaronock, we have loitered long,
In lovely bosky nooks by murmuring streams,
Where leafy bowers afford a pleasing shade
From sun at noon-tide; where the air, rich laden
With odours of wild thyme and meadow sweet,
Is musical with hum of mountain bees
And insects dancing in the bright sunbeams.
Birds, too, in bush, or on the ferny brake,
Trill joyously their dulcet warblings wild,
Or pipe forth mellow flute-like notes. Sweet-brier,
Wild-rose, and scented honeysuckle form
Our sylvan bower, and gracefully entwine
The rustic bridge.

Then seeing

The farmer and his lad—both rowers skilled,
they are invited to step into the boat, and soon they

. dart 'tween islands fair, that gem
The bosom of the Loch,

and the keel runs up the banks of Inchcalliach, which gives the title to another word-picture that brings the scene vividly before memory's eye. From his vantage ground, an old churchyard on the summit, he views with the soul of a poet and the eye of a painter the surrounding country :—

. for here, in ancient times,
'Mid pibrochs wild, in boats the dead were borne
Across the lake, to sleep their last long sleep—
Lo ! what a scene of tranquil loveliness !
Kilpatrick braes and Leven's verdant slopes,
In gentle undulation stretch away
Towards the South ; white, towering in the North,
Benvoirlich and the high Glenfalloch range,
Huge mountain masses, sterile rocky steeps,
With blue crags, bound the distance. Over Luss
And Tarbet, lie the heights of Arroquhar,
Loch Long and dark Loch Goil, the Cobbler's strange
Fantastic peak conspicuous in the view.

GEORGE EYRE-TODD.



Yours very truly
Geo. Eyre-Todd

HENRY D. THOREAU, that American naturalist and most egotistical of writers, assumed to himself the office of high-priest of the doctrine of "plain living and high thinking." One ventures to think his egotism must have been acquired while he drank at his mother's breast, for Dr. Underwood says, that good lady was one day rather unkindly reminded by a visitor of the resemblance, patent to all

Concord, between the works of Mr. Emerson and the writings of Henry.

"Yes," calmly replied the proud woman, "Mr. Emerson *does* write like my son."

In his retirement to the seclusion of Walden Pond, Thoreau thought to demonstrate how a man may be independent of his fellows, and recognise his indebtedness to little else save Mother Nature; and yet, as Lowell says, "The tub of Diogenes had a sounder bottom. Thoreau's experiment actually presupposed all that complicated civilisation which it theoretically abjured. He squatted on another man's land; he borrows an axe; his boards, his nails, his bricks, his mortar, his books, his lamp, his fish-hooks, his plough, his hoe, all turn state's evidence against him as an accomplice in the sin of that artificial civilisation which rendered it possible that a person such as Henry D. Thoreau should exist at all."

Still, the lesson of Thoreau's life is worthy of our most serious thought, his life in the main, was a protest against the usages of society that spends precious time and energies, for what? Simply to obtain and enjoy superfluous wants, leaving out of sight and mind the higher and *real* wants pertaining to our intellectual and spiritual nature. As Lowell has it, "His whole life was a rebuke of the waste and aimlessness of our American luxury, which is an abject enslavement to tawdry upholstery." Had Henry D. Thoreau, by his life example, done nothing else save point the finger to this great sin of the nations, he had earned our thanks; but he did more, he was a keen student of nature, and, like an ardent lover, he could detect and demonstrate in the choicest of language, the various moods or feelings that swept o'er the face of his mistress.

George Eyre-Todd is a disciple of Thoreau, in so far as protesting against the needless waste and extravagance of the city life of to-day, and believes that, with the vast majority, it is a toiling week in week out for a competency which is never realised, a hoping for a happier future which they seldom see, and that with a sordid grip of the muck-rake they merely exist, entirely forgetting that the real joy of life is of the present, and which they are daily casting to the winds.

An article from the pen of Mr. Eyre-Todd, "In an Iron City," which appeared in *The Illustrated London News*, gave a graphic description of the life lead by many of the citizens of this city of ours. Speaking of enjoyment, he says, they must perforce seek such out of doors. As he pertinently asks, "How could enjoyment be found in the squalid one-room houses, where eye and mind can never free themselves from the most sordid details of existence?"

He has also a strong belief in the feasibility of the development of rural crafts and the utilization of neglected rural resources.

We must, however, attractive as this subject is to ourselves, proceed to deal with Mr. Eyre-Todd's own life history and his published works.

Where now is the newly opened Prince's Dock, defines the locality in the district of Govan where George Eyre-Todd was born in the year 1862. Of his ancestors we know of one, his grandfather, who was minister of the Relief Kirk at Bathgate. His father is a member of a well-known firm in Glasgow, but of his mother he can remember nothing, only a wistful glance now and then at a miniature portrait on the wall serves to remind him of her who died when her son was but two years old.

After spending some years at minor academies he was transferred to the Glasgow High School, then situated in John Street, City, and there he made friendships and formed associations that have had their influence in moulding his life. These boy friends got interested in aquariums, museums, Saturday rambles, Andersonian lectures, while the peers in the realm of fiction, Kingsley, Thackeray, Scott, Dickens, etc., found in them true votaries.

The University at Gilmorehill was his next step, and there he began to feel the first distinct promptings of the desire to spend life in the pursuit of letters.

After leaving college Mr. Eyre-Todd was engaged in commercial pursuits for some years, but at length, in the year 1884, he abandoned commerce for letters, and determined, like many another literary aspirant, to make a descent on Fleet Street.

His experiences in London, as given in "Four Months in Bohemia," a series of articles which appeared in the

columns of *The Modern Church*, read like a romance. 'Tis well said "truth is stranger than fiction." Before going to the great city, he had contributed, stories, articles, reviews of books, etc., to the country newspapers *at the usual terms*, and he had also shot at higher game, but all to no purpose. His MSS. came regularly back from *Cornhill, Macmillan's*, etc., but the slightest encouragement, contained, it might be in the terms of the note declining the article or story, was enough to light up again the lamp of hope within, and soon brain and pen were busy as ever on new subjects. No amount of discouragement could efface from his memory the story of Dr. Johnson and his first assault on literary London; of Robert Buchanan and the short-lived genius David Gray; or of William Black's success since leaving our city.

Like many another who goes to the Metropolis in search of literary fame, he soon made acquaintance with the genus, literary shark, who, *for a consideration*, is prepared to set your foot on the golden ladder that leads from obscurity to the heaven of fame.

He very soon, too, got disabused of his preconceived ideas of literary Bohemianism. Having been introduced to a known literary man in London, this gentleman showed him considerable kindness, and said he would be pleased to see him at his house, but warned him not to expect to meet much company, literary folk, and so forth. "All the stuff one reads in novels," he said, "about the gay Bohemianism of authorship is sheer nonsense. The men who do anything real in literature are steady, hard-working fellows, who have no time to throw away." This was not by any means unwelcome news to Mr. Eyre-Todd, and but served to nerve his arm for the fray.

Success was slow in coming his way, however, and our friend, with an artist "chum"—who, like himself had gone to London to make his way—found themselves in great straits, and, almost as a last resource, applied at the stage-door of Drury Lane Theatre to see Sir (then Mr.) Harris, and offer themselves as "waves" or anything else in the "general utility" line. It was no use, however, and the pair went home with their spirits nigh in their boots, when lo! the silver lining appeared in the shape of a note from the

editor of *The Graphic*, agreeing to insert an article of Mr. Eyre-Todd's, provided it was cut down to about one-third of its original length. And so a footing was gained on the first rung of the ladder.

Mr. George Eyre-Todd's stay in London resulted in the formation of a literary connection that has extended very much since, till now his name is familiar to readers of *The Graphic*, *Illustrated London News*, *The Gentleman*, and other high-class magazines.

In his earlier years he had written extensively in verse, and the collection, after several ineffectual calls on other houses, found a publisher in Mr. Alexander Gardner, of Paisley. The verses are the product of youthful years, for their author was but twenty-one when they were issued from the press. The little volume is entitled "The Lady of Ranza and other Poems."

"The Lady of Ranza," which gives the title to the volume, is a cleverly written narrative poem, telling of the love of two brothers for their cousin, "Sweet Lerna, the Lady of Ranza." The poem has many exquisite descriptive passages in it.

"Shadow," a plaintive monody, which is the concluding piece in the volume, has been set to music as a song by Stephen Richardson.

A year after the publication in 1884 of "The Lady of Ranza," Mr. Elliot Stock, of London, published "The Sage of Thebes," an epic poem written under the influence of Bulwer Lytton's "Zanoni."

In the winter of 1887, Mr. Eyre-Todd wrote the Introduction to the Poems of Ossian for Mr. Sharp's *Canterbury Series* of the poets. The introduction is a valuable contribution to the writings on this much belaboured question of the authenticity of Macpherson's translation of the Gaelic Homer, and, if the reader wants to have the pros and cons of the question placed before him in a concise and intelligent way he should procure this cheap handy volume. It is published by Mr. Walter Scott, London.

The year 1890 saw the publication of "The Sketch-Book of the North," from the press of Messrs. William Hodge & Co., of this city. This little book "caught on" to the public taste as soon as it appeared; the first issue of two thousand

copies being immediately taken up, and a second edition called for. Most of the articles in the book have been copied into American and Australian papers. As a book for summer reading, wherewith to beguile the tedium of a railway journey, we know nothing better than the "Sketch Book."

The last five years of Mr. Eyre-Todd's life have been fruitful of much solid literary work. A publication of importance, and in connection with which he received flattering press notices, was the "Abbotsford Series of Scottish Poets" (Messrs. William Hodge & Co., Glasgow); the seventh and last volume was published last Christmas. In 1893 Mr. Lewis of Selkirk published his "Byways of the Scottish Border" in a handsome illustrated quarto. Two years later Messrs. Sampson, Low & Co., published his romance, "Anne of Argyle"; the American rights being bought up by Messrs. Stokes & Co. That same year there came from the press of Messrs. Cassell & Co., in a handsome quarto, with over 200 illustrations, his "Scotland, Picturesque and Traditional;" this volume was the outcome of wanderings through storied and little known corners of the land with staff and knapsack. Christmas of 1894 saw the publication by Messrs. Bayley & Ferguson, Glasgow, of "Ancient Scots Ballads; with their traditional airs"; these were edited by Mr. Eyre-Todd. Of re-issues the latest was a new and fully illustrated edition of the "Sketch Book," which had been preceded by a companion book, "Vignettes of the North." In the last mentioned the author's grandfather stands for the picture in the sketch. "A Minister of the Relief," while his father is mirrored in "A Gentleman of the Road."

At the present moment the most important commission on hand is a book which aims to be a standard work on Glasgow Cathedral. Messrs. Morison Brothers are the publishers, and, besides Mr. Eyre-Todd's contributions, articles from Archbishop Eyre, Dr. Macadam Muir, Dr. Gordon, Messrs. A. H. Millar, P. M'Gregor Chalmers, etc., will be included.

PROFESSOR JOHN VEITCH, LL.D.



VEITCH is one of the oldest names mentioned in Border history. Early in the sixteenth century the name of William Vache (the old rendering of "Veitch") of Dawik, appears in a list of barons and lairds of Peeblesshire "who

found caution in various sums to enter before the Justice, on a warning of fifteen days, to underlye the law for all crimes to be imputed against them ; presumably in connection with Border reiving.

In the ballad "The Gallant Grahams," we have a reference to the name in the lines—

"And gallant Veitch upon the field,
A braver face was never seen."

Of this gallant Veitch, Sir Walter Scott, in one of his notes anent that ballad, says, "I presume this gentleman to have been David Veitch, brother to Veitch of Dawick, who, with many other of the Peebleshire gentry, was taken at Philiphaugh."

"Up to the Union of the Crowns, and even later," says Professor Veitch "the lairds of Dawyck had, besides their ancestral tower, a residence in Peebles, known latterly as 'The Pillars,' and situated to the north-east of the town cross."

Never was bearer of the historic name more imbued with tender and passionate love for his native borderland than the late Professor Veitch. It makes itself apparent in every page of his exhaustive, eloquent, and graceful tribute to the history of that country side, which contained his heart in its every burn and vale and hill, "The History and Poetry of the Scottish Border."

The Professor was born at Peebles on the 24th day of October, 1829. He received his primary education at the local grammar school, and, in his sixteenth year, entered the University of Edinburgh, where he came under the influence of Sir William Hamilton, and distinguished himself as a student in logic and moral philosophy ; becoming ultimately assistant to that eminent metaphysician and logician, and whose life and works, he, in later years honoured by the publication of various volumes. At the close of his career at Edinburgh University, John Veitch was enabled to add M.A. to his name, and, in after years, had the further honorary degree of LL.D. conferred upon him by his *Alma Mater*. In the year 1860, Dr. Veitch was appointed Professor of Logic and Rhetoric at the University of St. Andrews, which chair he filled for four years. At the end of that time

he received a like appointment in our own College, then situated on the old ground in the High Street, the thought of which recalls many hallowed memories, alike to Professors and students of those times that closed with the demolition of the ancient, time-stained, crow-stepped front, and the erection of the more modern seat of learning at Gilmorehill. The Professor, whenever opportunity occurred, was off to "The Loaning," his place at Peebles, and there he passed away on 3rd September, 1894.

But to speak of the Professor's purely literary work.

The key to many tunes is to be found in the closing note, and in the following quotation, taken from that fine, sustained peroration that lingers in our ears as we conclude our study of "The History and Poetry of the Scottish Border," will be found the author's estimate of the value of Border poetry, and its place in our national literature:—

"It is," says Dr. Veitch, "simple, outward, direct, not without art, especially in its later forms, yet powerful mainly because it is true to feelings of the human heart, which are as universal and permanent as they are pure; and because it is fresh as the sights and sounds of the varied land, of hill and dale, of purple moorland and clear sparkling streams, which it loves so well. . . . The close work-shops of our literary manufactures would be all the better for a good fresh breeze from the hills and the holms of the Teviot and the Yarrow."

A curious item of Border history, connected with those blood-feuds 'twixt families, was the custom of leaving "the right hand of male children unchristened, that it might deal the more deadly, in fact the more *unhallowed* blow to the enemy." John Leyden has preserved the custom in his verse—

And at the sacred font, the priest
Through ages left the master-hand unblest,
To urge, with keener aim, the blood-encrusted spear.

In leaving that branch of his subject which deals with the historical ballads that refer mostly to the reiving times, our author concludes—

"There was a good deal of roughness and coarseness in their life, a good deal of plain speaking, as in their ballads; but their circumstances afforded the fullest scope for indi-

vidualism of character, for personal courage and prowess, endurance and daring, skill of fight and fence, not unmixed with a fine spirit of chivalry and a high sense of honour.

. . . They certainly risked their lives in the act ; and they contrast favourably with some people in our own times, who safely and respectably rob by schemes of bubble companies, or cheat by means of adulterated goods, or send rotten ships to sea." This is a more scientific age, the Professor might have added.

We cannot close the volume without making reference to the "Ballads and Songs of the Yarrow ;" the scene and the source of so much that is grand and touching in the old poetry of the Borders, as the author says. Beginning with a reference to that pathetic, old-time, gem of poesy, "Willie's rare and Willie's fair," Professor Veitch remarks on and quotes the "Douglas Tragedy," "The Dowie Dens," and others. Among the Songs we have Lady Grizzel Bailie's "Were na my heart licht I wad die," Robert Crawford's "Tweedside," William Hamilton of Bangour's "Busk ye, busk ye," and others. Then we come to Jean Elliott, the author of the most delightful version of "The Flowers of the Forest," beginning—

I've heard them liltin', at the ewe milking,
Lasses a-liltin' before dawn of day ;
But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning ;
The flowers of the forest are all wede away.

"To the author of these lines," says Professor Veitch, "we owe something which we can never repay, and for which countless generations will bless her."

The other, and more generally known version of "The Flowers of the Forest," was written by Alison Rutherford, daughter of Robert Rutherford of Fairnalie, the scion of an old Border House, Rutherford of Hundalee. Miss Rutherford became the wife of Patrick Cockburn, advocate.

Professor Veitch was a Border man among Border men. He revelled with supreme delight in the history of that country-side, legendary and traditionary. He had a plea for the reiver, which he found in comparing that free-handed, daring life, with phases of the commercial life of to-day, that cannot bear much of the clear light of noon. With Border

fairy tales and legends he was entranced, and followed the Shepherd of Altrive in his mental vagaries and imaginings with the fresh, whole-hearted zest and delight of the youth who gets entangled in the mazy woodlands, as he endeavours to handle the coquettish songster that lures from tree to tree with its coy "twitt, twitt."

In a sentence, "The Borderer who is entirely impervious to the influence of Border song, if there be any such, may fairly be given up as incapable of education in any true sense of that word."

These are the Professor's own words we have quoted, but withal, Dr. Veitch's interest in matters literary was by no means confined to Border history, its legends, its fairy, and witch lore. His sympathies were too deep, his critical acumen too keen, and his catholicity of taste too wide to admit of limitation of interest in anything that savoured of poetry or romance. Hence it is that we find so much genuine enthusiasm pervading the pages of Dr. Veitch's work, "The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry," and, where the Professor is thoroughly interested, we have the enunciation of thoughts that demand our careful consideration and study.

At the outset of his work, Professor Veitch rejoices at the decided growth, within the last fifty years, of the feeling for Nature, but in order to define the genuine feeling, he bids us beware of certain emotions that animate men, and which may sometimes be mistaken for the sincere love of Nature. He instances sportsmen, who, in many cases are actuated, primarily, at least, by the desire for a big "bag;" the angler, who is more eager to fill his basket than to admire the beauties of the lovely brook, the waters of which he lashes with his line; the citizen out for a holiday, whose pleasure he thinks, is not far removed from conditions that accompany fresh air and a healthy appetite. "They are few, indeed," he deplores, "who reach a supreme satisfaction on the wilds, who delight in them merely for what they are, and who find in them, as there may be found, the near presence of a Personal yet Supreme Power, whose communion is never wanting to the solitary lover and worshipper of Nature."

"The Laird's Tryst," one of Professor Veitch's poems, included in his "Hillside Rhymes," gives in truthful por-

trayal a village drama, like Janet Hamilton's "Effie," full of the deepest pathos and tenderest sorrow.

.
In thick o' the Stell they found him deid,
Deid hangin' on the trystin' tree,
Aye haunted by the pale fair face,
Weary of the weird he had to dree.

.
He smoor'd the young life i' the red earth,
The red earth now lies him abune ;
And ne'er a finger o' heaven will touch 't,
Save shudd'ring glint o' the hast'ning mune.

That closing line brings Nature into close symbolic touch with human nature in its abhorrence of the dark deed that goaded on the "Laird" to his unhallowed grave. It is accentuated in the closing verse of the poem.

And then o' nights no wind down the glen
That does not stay, and sough and rave,
'Mid the wearied firs o' the gloomy stell,
In whose heart lies the unhallow'd grave.

We can simply enumerate the many and valuable contributions made by Professor Veitch to the literature of his time. In the year 1850 he published a translation of "Descartes on Method," with an introductory essay, which attained to a second edition, with enlarged introductory essay in 1887 ; in 1853 he gave "Meditations and Selections from Principles of Philosophy of Descartes, with Notes ;" "Memoir of Dugald Stewart, 1858 ; in the years 1859 and 60, he edited, along with Dean Mansel, "Sir William Hamilton's Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic ;" 1869, "Memoir of Sir William Hamilton ;" 1872, "Hillside Rhymes ;" 1875, "The Tweed and Other Poems," also "Lucretius and the Atomic Theory ;" 1877, "The History and Poetry of the Scottish Border ;" 1882, "Sir William Hamilton," in Blackwood's Philosophical Series ; 1883, "Sir William Hamilton, the Man and His Philosophy ;" 1885, "The Institutes of Logic ;" 1887, "The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry ;" 1889, "Merlin and Other Poems," also "Knowing and Being"—a criticism, chiefly, of Mr. T. H. Green's "Prologomena," "Border Essays," 1896. Besides all these he contributed many valuable papers to *Mind*, *Blackwood's*, *Fraser's*, *The Transactions of the Wordsworth Society*, etc.

ROBERT WALKER.



Robt. Walker

MANY of the greatest works that genius has produced, whether in the realms of literature or of art, have been the reproduction, in permanent form, on the canvas or on the printed page, of scenes and incidents that have been

familiar to us all, and our intimate acquaintance with which, enables us to appreciate the truthfulness of detail and graphic force that is portrayed in these pictures.

This strain of thought was strongly forced upon our mind one evening, as we listened to Mr. Robert Walker, in the Corporation Galleries, while he spoke to us of Sir David Wilkie; for Mr. Walker spoke rather than lectured, and we liked the slightly discursive and conversational style of the speaker as an agreeable change from the severely measured sentences of the usual platform lecturer.

That Mr. Walker knew his subject thoroughly was evident from the few applications he made to his manuscript; referring to it only at odd intervals to confirm his memory as to a date or other matter of detail.

Mr. Walker dwelt with loving fondness on these pictures by Wilkie, which, from their strong human interest, have made his name what it is. His "Penny Wedding," "Duncan Gray," "Blind Man's Buff," "The Cut Finger," "The Rent Day," "Reading the Will," and others. The incidents associated with each picture, he seemed to have at ready command, heightening, if that were possible, our appreciation of each and all of them.

It is quite apparent that a large measure of Mr. Walker's appreciation goes out towards the work of those artists whose aim is to preserve for all time the scenes, the traits of character, the phases of humour and of pathos, that are bound up in the humbler walks of life. In his monograph of Thomas Faed, R.A., which appears in "Toilers in Art" he says "Many competent critics and artists assert that a picture should not tell a story, and that the subject is of no consequence," then, with that good nature, which is characteristic of the man, Mr. Walker proceeds—"Well, it may be so to them? We need not dogmatise. The realm of art is surely wide enough to include those who believe that a picture is valuable only for its technique and tone, and those who long to find in a picture something that rouses and responds to their spiritual and intellectual natures."

We in Glasgow should feel grateful that in our midst we have such a gentleman. One who is an accomplished writer of prose and verse, and whose rare taste and knowledge of the fine arts in all its branches is so well known.

Mr. Robert Walker was born in Glasgow on the 19th of March, 1843. His father held the position of accountant to the Edinburgh and Glasgow Bank at the time of his death, which took place in the year 1851, when the family removed to the Capital, where young Robert received his education at the Edinburgh Institution.

In 1858 he entered the office of the Edinburgh Life Assurance Company as an apprentice, attaining by and bye the position of inspecting agent for Lancashire, and then for Ireland, and ultimately becoming secretary of the Dublin Branch in 1870.

Two years later he received the appointment of secretary of the Scottish branch of the Reliance Life Assurance Society, London, when he returned to his native city, and, when, in 1880, our handsome Institute of the Fine Arts was erected, Mr. Walker was unanimously appointed acting secretary.

This is a position in life much more congenial to the tastes of our author than the severely practical round of daily commercial life. Mr. Walker was always fond of books and literary work, and in his youthful days contributed stories and sketches to the old *Glasgow Weekly Citizen*. He contributed a short story to *Hedderwick's Miscellany*. In the early days of the latter publication Mr. Walker became Edinburgh correspondent, contributing a weekly letter; Thomas Carlyle's visit to the Capital forming the subject of one of his interesting descriptive sketches.

During the last ten years he has written for both the *Daily and Weekly Herald*, *Graphic*, *Good Words*, the *Art Journal* and *Black and White*. He supplied the letterpress for the special Glasgow and Aberdeen numbers of the *Graphic*. The descriptive part of the *Art Journal's* special number on the Glasgow International Exhibition was from his pen, as well as the letterpress of "Pen and Ink Notes in the Glasgow Exhibition" (with illustrations by Mr. Raffles Davidson) published by Messrs. Virtue & Co. He was a valued colleague of Mr. Henley, the editor, in preparing the Memorial volume of the Loan Fine Art Collection of the same Exhibition.

In Literary and Art Clubs connected with our city, Mr. Walker has ever taken an active part, having been one of the

founders, and the first secretary of the Glasgow Pen and Pencil Club. He is one of the original members of the Glasgow Ballad Club.

"Toilers in Art" is the title of a handsome volume edited by Mr. Henry C. Ewart, from the press of Messrs. Isbister & Co., of London, and contains nearly a score of biographical and analytical sketches of eminent artists. Nigh the half of these articles are from the pen of our townsman, Mr. Walker.

In speaking of the painters' art, Mr. Walker does not simply stand and scrutinize the painting, entirely forgetting the artist, but, instead, he weighs the facts of the artist's early years, his mode of life and thought, and finds the interpretation suggested on the canvas. Thus, he finds that Léon Lhermitte, the French master of charcoal drawings, whose village subjects are the admiration of all—"has, of course, a studio in Paris, but during the summer most of his time is spent in his native village. He is one of the villagers himself, knowing every one and known to every one. There, far away from the distractions of the world of fashion and folly, he can think his own quiet thoughts, and work out undisturbed and tranquilly, his artistic conceptions." The success that at one time attended the illustrations of child-life by Oscar Pletsch—"Uncle Pletsch" he was affectionately called by his crowd of little sympathisers and admirers—Mr. Walker attributes to "the outcome of a sincere interest in his subject, extensive powers of observation, and a thorough understanding of the moods and manners of children."

The Dutch school of to-day is represented by Mr. Walker's sketch of the life and work of Josef Israels.

Youthful aspirants in any walk in life are apt to be discouraged by the early rebuffs and disappointments that are certain to mar the progress of the man who bears an unknown name. One of Israel's early experiences may help to inspire the flickering flame of hope that may be slowly burning to the socket in the heart of the young artists of to-day, for we are told that—"In Groningen there was a well-known character, a pedlar, who dealt mostly in pipes. Of him Israels made a life-size study, and sent it to a local exhibition. The picture was hung, but sad to say, on the

back of a door, and could be seen only when the door was shut !”

The helpful companionship of Mollinger, who, like Israels, “was weary of the inanities of the day, and longed to have free play for his individuality,” encouraged him to persevere in the study of life which lay at his door, and so among the humble fishermen at Zandvoort he found his true vocation, and vital tone and character were transferred to his canvas. We in Glasgow will not readily forget that fine work by Israels, “The Mendicant,” which graced the walls of our Fine Art Institute a season or two ago. From the canvas, poverty appeals most powerfully to the heart of him who has the eye to see and appreciate.

Sketches of Alexis Harlamoff and Maxime Lalanne complete the list of subjects that comprise Mr. Walker’s contributions to this volume ; a study of which forms in itself an education in art.

Mr. Walker has not composed many poems in his day, but what he has written takes the reader back to them again and again.

His “Level Crossing” has for long been a most popular recitation with elocutionists all over the country, and why it should be so needs not the vision of a seer to discover. The lines tell with simple, rugged, yet graphic eloquence the story of one, who gave evidence of his sterling christianity in sacrificing his life for another.

We quote Mr. Walker’s poem entitled, “Crillon the Brave.” The story of the old French hero brings out in another light the significance of the sacrifice that darkened the noonday sun around Mount Calvary on that fateful day ; that darkest hour which preceded the dawn of this world’s new day of reconciliation. How forcibly these lines bring home the fact of the utter insignificance of all other sacrifices and privations compared with the pain and travail borne by the Son of Man ere was ushered in that happier and brighter era in the world’s history.

CRILLON THE BRAVE.

THROUGH all the vast cathedral pile
The preacher’s deep voice rolled,
As he with insight rare and true,
The oft-heard story told—

Of how our Lord upon the cross
The sins of men had borne ;
Of how, deserted and alone,
He met men's rage and scorn !

No frothy pulpiteer was he,—
Straight from the heart he spoke,
And in his hearer's awe-struck hearts
An answering echo woke.

Among the crowd old Crillon sat,
His whole soul deeply stirred ;
An arrow to his conscience seemed
The preacher's every word !

"Crillon the brave,"—no better knight
Than he had wielded lance,
In all the fights that drenched with blood
The fairest fields of France.

His King he served with honest faith
Through many a doubtful day,—
The wisest at the council-board,
The foremost in the fray.

But now of court and camp heart-sick,
His weary soul sought rest ;
The warrior's spirit, stern and rude,
The Church's power confessed.

White-haired and bent old Crillon sat,
His wild hot youth all past ;
But still he burned with martial fire,
A soldier to the last !

"Deserted and alone, no friend
To pity, none to save,
The meek-souled Lamb of God was sent
Despised to the grave."

The preacher paused : a clash of steel
Through all the silence rang
As Crillon, young and strong once more,
To his full stature sprang,—

And waving high above his head
His battle-dinted blade,—
That blade from which in other years
His foes had shrunk dismayed,—

The fierce wild light of long-past days
O'er-flushing all his brow,
He cried with anguish in his cry,
"Oh Crillon, where wert thou?"

HELEN WALLACE.



*Helen Wallace
(Gordon King)*

TO the writing of novels there is no end—to alter slightly a well-worn statement of fact—and when many brains and hands enter the lists for the same conflict, the inevitable is the result ; to wit, the survival of the fittest.

Survival with a writer of novels, means the enlistment of the attention of many readers from sheer merit in the quality of the work produced, and the consequent kindly consideration on the part of publishers towards that writer's manuscript.

Three qualities go to make a successful novelist. Graphic portrayal of character, born of a wide and deep study of human nature, with its fears and its hopes, its joys and its sorrows; sympathetic and picturesque description of scenery and incidents; and that literary "touch" which it were as vain to attempt to describe as to explain the power demonstrated in the *modus operandi* of the artist whose creation arrests the attention of every frequenter of the art gallery.

Dickens was supremely gifted with the first quality, Scott greatly excelled in the second, and every writer of note, with but few exceptions, can lay claim to the last.

George Eliot was pre-eminently a psychologist, and hence throughout her books we find these concrete epigrammatical deliverances that can be read and re-read apart from the story altogether, and which have a strong bearing on individual life and thought, so pregnant are they with living truth.

Soul analysis has evidently been the study of years with Miss Helen Wallace, who, under the *nom de plume* of "Gordon Roy," has written some first-rate novels. Some of the philosophy which she gives voice to, might, so far at least as depth of thought is concerned, have been uttered by the author of "Adam Bede."

This nineteenth century is an age of enlightenment, and is likewise (we might say, consequently), an age of doubt; and when any claim is made on behalf of a writer, such as we have put forward, in favour of our clever young Glasgow novelist, proof is expected to follow on the heels of the assertion.

The following quotations, which we cull from one of Miss Wallace's works, will amply justify the high ground we have taken:—

"There are few troubles that do not seem more endurable under a sunset sky; in the broad calm of a summer evening the tumult within dies down as silence deepens around. It is only when the earthquake shock of some crushing grief

has shattered our individual world that the wide, unheeding, unknowing tranquillity of earth and sky becomes cruellest mockery instead of soothing balm."

"This agreeable consciousness of being faultlessly dressed, is most reassuring to the human mind."

"It was the inevitable reaction after some supreme life crisis, when the first exaltation of high resolve has evaporated a little, when the heart throws off the yoke of conscience; and self, crushed down and silenced for a space, raises its clamorous voice again, and resumes its former sway to avenge that brief dethronement. Then it is, when the flames have died out upon the altar, leaving only cold ashes and charred unsightly fragments—when the right hand has been cut off, or the right eye plucked out—that some busy devil whispers the tormenting suggestion that the sacrifice was needless, and that we have maimed ourselves for nothing. Far from being saints or heroes, we have been but hasty fools, and are self-doomed to beg as cripples by the wayside of life, when we might have marched joyfully onward to grasp its fairest prizes."

"There are no anæsthetics in spiritual surgery. No numbness of feeling when that sword, which is quick and powerful, and which can pierce, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, is wielded by conscience."

"Some woman are never seen to greater advantage than when with their infants in their arms; the helplessness, the entire dependence of the child, awakens a deeper tenderness, thrills a finer fibre, which apparently ceases to vibrate as the young life becomes more and more a separate existence."

"The heart is the most illogical organ, and refuses to be satisfied with any quantity of the most polished stones that reason can offer it, in place of the bread of desire which it craves."

Miss Helen Wallace is the fourth daughter of the late much respected senior pastor of East Campbell Street United Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Alexander Wallace, D.D., who was himself a litterateur, and who did good and noble work.

Miss Wallace's 'prentice effort was in a story competition in connection with the Manse Ladies' Temperance Society, when she carried off the prize with a short tale, entitled, "Evil is wrought by want of Thought."

Five years ago a cleverly written short story, entitled "A Broken Dream," appeared under her own name in the columns of *The Weekly Citizen*, when that weekly was running a brilliant series, in which not a few of our best local writers figured.

Miss Wallace has written tales and articles for *Belgravia*, *Murray's* and other high-class magazines.

Messrs. T. Nelson & Son published Miss Wallace's first volume. It was a story of Irish life, entitled "For Her Sake," which displayed decided power, and gave the promise of better things to come.

In the volume of *The Sun* magazine, 1889-90, a serial story from her pen appeared. As a study of country life it has a freshness and a truthfulness in detail all its own. This story, entitled "For Better for Worse," has since been published in volume form by Mr. Gardner, Paisley. Last year a story by Miss Wallace, "On Carfrae Sands," ran in the columns of the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*, and was favourably received.

Some authors, not by any means obscure writers, have a most objectionable habit of throwing out hints by the way, that portend trouble and sorrow for the characters which figure in their romances. To say that the serial form of issuing stories gives rise to this mode of composition is no excuse, because where the plot is of sufficient interest and the incidents correspondingly strong, no such questionable artifice need be resorted to, and the insertion here and there of these dark hints is but a sign of weakness in literary execution.

In Miss Wallace's tales such a form of composition never presents itself. She writes of to-day's life of her characters as not knowing what an hour may bring forth, and, consequently, the future course of events is kept out of sight, and the reader is carried along by the general interest of the story, awaiting the *denouement* of the plot with impatience.

The portrayal of one of the characters in "His Cousin Adair"—Elfie, a young sister of the heroine, Adair Earlstoun

—is a bit of good work, and far removed from ordinary hackneyed lines. In the early part of the story Elfie appears as a young girl whose mind seems to lack in some degree the capabilities of her age, and yet the fire which lightens up her eye at times, appears to give the lie to the half-expressed fears that arise in the minds of her friends. Her future development shews that music is the spirit which stirs the soul of the dreaming, listless girl to its very depths, and, with her fingers wandering carelessly, to all appearance, across the ivory keys of the organ, she seems to forget those around her, and to find herself in a world where those that stand by her side cannot enter, far less understand. The last note of the weird, extemporised music having died away, the player's energies relax again, and she seems to come back to her normal state as if from some hypnotised condition.

Old Saunders, the gardener-beadle, is a character in the story, and a worthy, to boot. His opinion of artists is about as elevated as that of the farmer who figures in Sir Daniel Macnee's story, which Dr. Hedderwick tells in his "Backward Glances."

Saunders says, "Deed it seems to me a peety that a man should pit by so muckle o' his God-gi'en time on a bit pictur', when they'll tak' your likeness for a saxpence in Muirshiels."

Mrs. Mackay, the minister's wife, is another fine creation of Miss Wallace's pen, and the character is kept up with artistic consistency all through the romance. Mrs. Mackay is a good-hearted soul enough, but thoroughly wanting in tact, and being a most voluble talker makes many a blundering speech. Here is her style of offering condolence; she is speaking to Adair after the death of her younger sister Elfie.

"'All things work together for good, you know, I can quite understand your feeling, my dear,—I can speak from experience; but the sooner we recognise that, the better for ourselves. I remember my first trial,' partly releasing Adair's hand to hunt for her handkerchief amid the folds of her gown; 'Dear me!' dropping into the querulous tone Adair knew so well, 'I wish Miss Jarvie would put my pocket where I could get at it easily. Sometimes I have

fairly to stand up before I can find it, and that's very awkward, isn't it? If she is making your dresses, I would give her a word about that, my dear. Everything is for the best, of course,' the handkerchief having been found at last, 'and I am sure you would find it helpful if you could acknowledge that."

" 'She was a sweet gentle creature, and I am sure you must miss her very much, she was not quite—'

" 'Not quite what, Mrs. Mackay?' said Adair in a cold level voice.

" 'Oh, my dear, you know what I mean, I am sure. She wasn't quite like other people, you know. Of course she might have outgrown it if she had got stronger; but then, you know, she might not,' growing more and more confused. At that moment Mrs. Mackay is relieved from her self-wrought embarrassment by the entrance of Adair's other sister Agnes, when the conversation takes another turn."

WILLIAM WALLACE.



*Engraving for the use of
William Wallace*

WE ask not what cultured pens *have* written of Robert Burns, but, rather, what Scottish writers of eminence, since his day, have *not* essayed the task of dealing either with the man or his works? Robert Heron's Memoir of the poet may be taken as the first of many works on his life.

The year 1800 saw the publication of Dr. Currie's edition, though it was not till 1801, when the second edition was sent out, that the editor's name appeared on the title page; J. G. Lockhart, in 1828, gave to the world his Life, "that

altogether inimitable, and, most impressive Memoir that ever was written," as the Ettrick Shepherd called it; Allan Cunningham, six years later, brought out his edition; Hogg and Motherwell produced their combined effort with the lapse of other two years; Alexander Whitelaw of the Book of "Scottish Song," and "Scottish Ballads" fame, in 1846, edited Messrs. Blackie & Son's fine work, which contained, besides Currie's "Life," an Essay on the Genius and Character of the Bard, by Professor Wilson. Then came, in the year 1851, that carefully written and valuable "Life and Works of Burns," by Robert Chambers. In this edition, for the first time, "the various compositions were strung in strict chronological order," and . . . "made to render up the whole light which they are qualified to throw upon the history of the life and mental progress of Burns."

George Gilfillan's sympathetic Essay on the Genius and Poetry of Burns, was included in Nichol's Library Edition of the British Poets, which came from the press in 1856.

The author of "A Life Drama," Alexander Smith, brought out in 1865 his edition through Macmillan & Co., London. He it was who characterised "Tam O' Shanter" (which was written in a day), as being, "since Bruce fought Bannockburn, the best single day's work done in Scotland." Two years later Dr. Hately Waddell's edition came from the press.

And of essayists, we can name the brightest in the bead-roll of our country's fame, who have vied with each other in trying to attain the flood-tide of their eloquence when dealing with the life and works of the Bard of Coila; Carlyle's name comes at once to our memory when we speak of essays on Burns. Of our poets, who among them has not been inspired to lay a tribute on the poet's grave? As Fitz-Greene Halleck says:

And still, as on his funeral day,
Men stand, his cold earth-couch around,
With the mute homage that we pay
To consecrated ground.

Those mentioned cover the more important editions of the poet's works up till thirty years ago.

In later years no more important contribution on the subject has come from the press than the new edition by Mr. William Wallace of Dr. Chambers's "Life and Works of Robert

Burns." It is admitted by those competent to judge, as being *the* work on the subject.

Mr. Wallace is the youngest brother of Dr. Robert Wallace M.P. for East Edinburgh, and at one time minister of Greyfriars' Church. His other brother, John, was minister of New Deer at the time of his death in 1876.

His father was head-gardener to Mrs. Shairp-Erskine, who acquired the estate and mansion of Castlehill, in Culross Parish, and changed its name to Dunimarle. Culross Parish is now united to the county of Fife, though at one time it was a detached portion of Perthshire. William Wallace was intended for the teaching profession, but after a short experience abandoned that walk of life. He then determined to obtain, like his brothers, a University education. He entered for a bursary competition at Aberdeen, where he came out 7th among 200; and in another, for which he competed at St. Andrews, he took first place. He decided to go to Aberdeen, and, after completing his course there, took his M.A. degree.

Mr. Wallace after an interval accepted the position of Classical Master in Ayr Academy, and it was in Ayr he began his literary career. He had some experience while at the University reviewing books for the *Aberdeen Free Press*, and, now beginning to contribute to the London papers, his name became known as a very competent critic and able writer, and when a vacancy occurred on the staff of the *Edinburgh Courant* he was appointed chief leader writer. There he remained two years. On the death of Thomas Aird he removed to Dumfries and assumed the editorship of the *Dumfries Herald*; extending the while his connection with various high-class London magazines.

After five years' experience in Dumfries he accepted a position on the staff of the London *Echo*, and while there he had opportunities of improving his position with the London Press. After the death of Mr. J. H. Stoddart in 1888, Mr. Charles Russell was appointed editor of the *Glasgow Herald*, and on that gentleman's invitation Mr. Wallace became assistant-editor, which position he still holds. It will be seen, as a writer has said in a notice of our subject, to whom we are indebted for our biographical particulars, that, his college days over, his various business engagements took him pretty

well in the footsteps of Burns ; first to Ayr, next to Edinburgh, then to Dumfries.

It has been said that "It may be questioned whether Robert Burns was as familiar with the Scotland of 1760-96 as is Mr. Wallace, and the outcome of Mr. Wallace's knowledge is found in his edition of Chambers's Burns."

With many people, whenever they begin to weigh up another person's character their hand instinctively reaches for the pot of black. It may be that the deep-down consciousness of their own sinfulness makes them commit a further sin in colouring their friend worse than he should be, in order that, in the opinion of the world, the self-constituted judge may come out somewhat more saintly by comparison with the character he has given his friend. Burns's way of life has been fiercely assailed, time and again, but we think all through Mr. Wallace's able and exhaustive essay on the Character and Genius of Burns, which is contained in this edition of his, he meets these detractors with clear and sound argument.

There are no hysterics about Mr. Wallace's article, but, calmly he adduces incisive, well-informed, conclusive matter, that goes far to place Burns's character in a fair and just light.

By a few selected quotations we will allow Mr. Wallace to speak for himself.

Speaking of Burns' resolves for an amended life :—"To live for duty and for poetry ; to set up a house, and install Jean as its mistress ; to support himself and his family by farming (and gauging if the two would combine) ; and to try and rise officially that he might secure the largest attainable leisure for poetry," Mr. Wallace asks :

"How did Burns work out the truly noble plan of life which he had laid down for himself? The earliest answer made to this question, under the authority of his first biographers, Heron, Currie, and, to a certain extent Walker, was that he entirely failed, through abandoning himself to alcoholic dissipation and its associated and resulting vices ; that, for its sake, he had mortgaged his home, wrecked his business career, neglected poetry, and brought himself to indigence and an early death. That this black picture was believed to be true by many in the locality where his last years were spent cannot be denied, and although subsequent investiga-

tion has greatly toned down the dark colouring of the first sketch, there is still a widespread impression that Burns's was a case of moral and artistic break down. Were this true it would be lamentable indeed. But it is not. A fair examination of the available evidence leads to a totally different conclusion, the worst that can be truly said is Carlyle's affirmation, that to the last 'the Soul of Burns, though scathed and marred, was yet living in its full moral strength, though sharply conscious of its errors and abasement.'" As Mr. Wallace says, truly, that is a very different matter from final ruin, suggesting only temporary and partial eclipse, from which time and effort might have brought deliverance.

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"It is plain that at this time Burns knew that there were people, as there are now, who thought that he had sacrificed his career to drink.

"Burns himself was manifestly not of that opinion, and the world, or that part of it that desires historical truth, will probably prefer his self-knowledge to any outside criticism. Not that there were no drinking bouts. His censors are entitled to this admission. Burns tells us of them, often in terms of anger, not only with himself, but with what he calls the 'savage hospitality' of the localities, the times, and the society in which he moved. It may be said that Burns ought to have struggled with and overcome the savage hospitality. He meant to do it, and tried to do it in the maturer period which we are considering. To say that he committed 'too many' excesses, and was therefore a moral failure, is to postulate that if he had committed only a few he would have been a moral success. That will not do. No man is allowed a certain minimum percentage of transgression. Tried by an objective standard, the differences between men are simply of degree. The saint and the pickpocket alike come short, although the one may fall somewhat further behind than the other. It is strange that in a country like Scotland, nourished theologically for three centuries and a half on the doctrine of justification by faith alone, it should be so often forgotten that the right standard by which to judge a man is not the objective but the subjective standard, not by what he does, but by what he is. The

real difference between men is an inward one, and the true question to ask about any man is whether he is trying to do his best? Or has he ceased to try? Or is he even trying to do his worst? The external moral failures of a man may throw light on this question, but they certainly will not serve to settle it justly if no regard is had to the number and strength of his temptations. A man may be often overthrown, and yet he may be anxious and resolute to win the victory. Accordingly, if we want to get at the truth about Burns, assuming for a moment the accuracy of what his worst detractors say, we must consider the nature of his temptations, and whether these alleged numerous triumphs proved that he had ceased to fight with them, and had deliberately given them a loose rein."

Again Mr. Wallace says :—

"Burns cannot be fairly judged unless by a test specially adapted to an artistic temperament of the intensest kind."

We have all met men, in the course of our journeyings through life, to whom it was no trouble to keep out of the social company and its attendant risks. Very often these same folk's company is scarcely value for even the slightest hospitality, and their absence is more valued, adding thus, in a negative way, to the sociality of the occasion. Others again, of a different temperament, containing more heart and love than the previous specimen, have to fight oft and sorely for the victory over that excess of sociality which Burns himself deplored so much.

Our last quotation from Mr. Wallace's able estimate of the Bard gives in a few words a fine summing up.

"He determined that not the spirit of the hireling, but only the spirit of nature that was in him, should speak through him. What he said, came—it was not fetched: hence it had the best chance to be genuine and true. Surely it is a noble and romantic spectacle, this of a poor man sacrificing certain gain that he might discharge in purity and power, the high function of a world's teacher."

Mr. Wallace is also author of "After the Revolution, and other fantasies" and "Scotland Yesterday": the former being a handsome volume of essays on various subjects, and the latter studies of our national life and character.

A. DEWAR WILLOCK.



A. Dewar Willock

THE feeling of exultation given expression to by Professor Aytoun in *Blackwood's Magazine* when he wrote—using the editorial “we”—“Seldom have we experienced a keener sense of our true greatness as a poet, than when we encountered on one occasion, a peripatetic minstrel deafening the Canongate with the notes of our particular music, and surrounded by an eager crowd demanding the half penny broad sheet,”—has ever been general, when the pleasing experience comes the way of the bard ; alas they be

few that find fame as song writers, and fewer still who find fame and glory meeting them thus in the bye-paths of life.

Many of our minor poets,—and I speak of men who have written much fine lyrical verse—would give all they have written to find themselves the author of one song that had caught the public ear, and which was destined to live and to entrance public audiences by its sweetness and power.

Byron, we know, envied Moore, while they sat in Pope's villa at Twickenham and heard the strains of one of the songs of the Bard of Erin floating across the waters. And though the subject of this article has not written songs to compare with "The Last Rose of Summer," or "The Minstrel Boy," he has written one sweet little, trig little song that has gained for its author considerable fame, and, like Professor Aytoun, Mr. Willock has had the pleasure of seeing his song vended and sung by those, rough-voiced, uncouth, wandering minstrels who handle the broad-sheets and the coppers with a deftness that admits of no delay or pause in the singing of their ditty.

The song, which is entitled "She noddit to me," is dedicated by special permission, to Her Majesty the Queen; the music, which is very pretty is by Mr. J. Hoffman, L.R.A.M., and published by Messrs. Hopkinson of London. It is a quiet and true picture of humble Deeside cottage-life, moreover, it is a picture—and herein lies the value—the merit of which is sustained throughout with no very strong colouring, but with deft touches that show the author to have had his heart in his work, and the power of interpreting human feelings.

I'm but an' auld body livin' up in Deeside,
In a two-roomed bit hoosie wi' a too-fa' beside,
Wi' my coo an' my grumphy I'm as happy's a bee;
But I'm far prooder noo since she noddit to me,
But I'm far prooder noo since she noddit to me.

I'm nae sae far past wi't, I'm gey trig and hale,
Can plant twa three tatties and look after my kail;
An' when oor Queen passes I rin oot to see,
Gin by luck she micht notice an' nod oot to me,
Gin by luck she micht notice an' nod oot to me,

But I've aye been unlucky, an' the blinds were aye doon,
Till last week the time o' her veesit cam' roon',
I waved my bit apron as brisk's I could dae,

An' the Queen 'aunched fu' kindly an' noddit to me,
 An' the Queen launched fu' kindly an' noddit at me.

My son sleeps in Egypt, it's nae use to friet,
 An' yet when I think o't I'm sair like to greet ;
 She may feel for my sorrow, she's a mither, ye see
 An' maybe she kent o't when she noddit to me,
 An' maybe she kent o't when she noddit to me.

Andrew Dewar Willock was born in Dundee on the 8th November, 1846. His school days were marked by no special brilliancy. He used to tell that he and another boy had an active competition for the foot of the class, and, with a flash of his ready wit, added, that even there he was conspicuously unsuccessful, because the other boy nearly always got it.

When a youth, however, he was a great reader, and he had plenty of opportunities, for he was the youngest of a large family of sons all of whom were subscribers to a lending library. His reading was of a pretty mixed order, consisting of Bible history, Marryat, "Pilgrim's Progress," Dickens, etc., all of which he "galloped" through with a voracious appetite.

"At the age of thirteen," to use his own words, "I began my career as a journalist 'by polishing up the handle of the big front door' of *The Dundee Advertiser* office," and for nineteen years he remained in the same employment as a compositor. It was not till the proprietors of *The Advertiser* started *The Evening Telegraph* that Mr. Willock had an opportunity of displaying his literary talent. For a number of years he contributed a humorous article weekly to the latter paper, under the title of "Job's Reflections." By-and-by his employers recognised the talent of the man who had spent so many years in their case-room, and they invited him to become sub-editor of *The People's Journal* under Mr. Latto, the well-known "Tammis Bodkin." This position Mr. Willock filled worthily for six or seven years, and it was during that time he wrote for the columns of his paper, "Rosetty Ends."

When *The Scottish People* started he was induced to transfer his services to the office of that paper, and so he removed to Aberdeen. *The Scottish People* newspaper eventually became the property of the owners of *The Glasgow Evening News*, and with it Mr. Willock joined the staff at Hope Street,

Glasgow. He has now been for some years on the staff of *The Glasgow Evening Times*, and lately was appointed editor of *The Glasgow Weekly Herald*, while still retaining his connection with the evening paper.

"Rosetty Ends; or, The Chronicles of a Country Cobbler," with illustrations by Mr. Martin Anderson, was published in book form in 1887, and has reached a third edition.

The note which appears at the beginning of the book, at the place where one is apt to look for a preface, is characteristic of the humour that flows through the succeeding pages. It is addressed, "Dear publisher," and says, "I do not claim a high moral purpose for the book, and if readers discover evidences of such in its pages, it is at their own risk, and I wash my hands of all responsibility."

Many bright flashes of wit gleam from these chronicles. The cobbler, known as "Job Bradawl," says, "I'm nae believer in spectres mair onnatural than what can be produced by a cheese supper."

Mr. Willock is no mean delineator of character, for example here is a description of tramps. "It's ill-judgin' when ye hae a guid ane or an ill ane. There are some o' them ill-lookin', hang-dog tykes, an' yet their hearts loup lichtly at the lauch o' a bairn, an' there are ithers wha can fawn an' smile an' look guid, wha are mean enough to steal the tail frae a mangey dog."

If you want a morsel of moralising, it is also to be had within the boards; despite the author's disclaimer in his opening note. Here is a bit, "He's an unco guid man that can review his haill life an' no mind o' something he wad rather nae ither body kent, an' I'm dootin', if I met a man who pretendit he was as guid as that, I wouldna care to lend him ony o' my siller."

"Job's" advice to lovers is worth quoting:

"Tell her she is bonnie, if ye like, but dinna mak her think she is ower bonnie for you; let her understand that she is guid, but hint as delicately as ye like that there's as guid fish in the sea as ever was selt in a cadger's cairt; let her ken by a' means that ye think her the woman o' the warld that is likely to mak' ye the happiest man on earth, but be sure she disna hae opportunity o' forgettin' that the position is a mutual ane, an' that if she disna be thankfu' for

the guid the gods hae gien her, she may gang farrer an' fare a hantle waur. Dinna mak' her ower conceitit afore the cries are in, but after that be as foolishly fond of her as you like. The fac' is that ilka marrit man should think that there is only ae true woman in the warld, an' he has got her."

The reader will notice that the banter runs through this whole advice till we reach the last sentence, when "Job" feels fain to draw a straicht face, and gives—to use his own style—"a bit of real square talk."

At the opening of the book season in the winter of 1890 there came from the Leadenhall Press, London, a volume of humorous essays by our author, being, in fact, the pick of his funny sketches which appeared in the columns of *The Evening Telegraph*, Dundee, and latterly in *The Scottish People* under the heading "Job's Reflections." Let me say here, in passing, that certain remarks, made by the reviewers of this volume, to the effect that Mr. Willock was indebted to "Idle thoughts of an idle fellow" for some of his conceptions were entirely without foundation. On the contrary, it is a fact that the last of Mr. Willock's articles had appeared in the columns of the newspaper with which he was then connected, fully two years before Mr. Jerome's "Idle Thoughts" had seen the light of print.

The book came out with the somewhat odd, and, I think, unfortunate title of "*Never* hit a man named Sullivan." What connection the advice contained in the title bears to the contents of the book is left pretty much to the reader's imagination. I would advise the reader not to let his imagination roam too far, but, instead, to dive into the contents within the boards, and leave the title to the consideration of the next man who may pause in front of the bookstall.

Mr. Willock has the knack, by no means a common one, of noting every-day occurrences, and treating them in a humorous way. Mr. Willock's humour, moreover, is always good natured, and if he does get sarcastic his remarks are ever free from the snarl that characterises the man of dyspeptic disposition. It may be a dissertation on the question, "Why do we smile?" or a vivid description of a sleepless night; or he tries to solve the question, "Why cats have tails?" All the same, he is ever happy, and very often pointed, a characteristic which cannot always be attached to

humorous productions. Let me give a sample from the chapter, "Why do we smile?"

"Once I saw a cat laugh. It was a poor starveling which had strayed into a place I had occasion to be in, and the unhappy brute, after a prowling round and finding nothing more appetising than blotting paper, rejected poetry, and old pencil stubs to eat, stretched itself in front of the fire and went to sleep. A good-hearted soul sent out for a pennyworth of liver, and when the toothsome dainty was brought in, a small piece was cut off and softly laid in front of that cat's nose, and developments were waited for. They came. The animal was apparently dreaming of the good things of cat-life, and the smell from the bit of raw liver was evidently in accord with the spirit of its dreams. Shortly a bit of tongue emerged from the mouth, then it passed softly and carressingly over the dry lips, the upper lip curled gently back, leaving the white teeth exposed. Then a tremor of pleased expression passed over the mouth, as a soft purr emerged from its throat, and the eyes more firmly pressed close, as if to shut out the stern, liverless world for ever, and so to remain in the land of dreams, of appetising smells."

It is not generally known that for two or three years now, a Glasgow journalist's work has been appearing regularly in that weekly, *Ally Sloper*. Mr. Willock has been represented weekly in the columns of that comic journal for years. He writes what I suppose I must term serials, plot *nil*, connected narrative, less,—if that were possible, and yet these sketches are full of rare fun. The author himself, says they are simply nonsense, but the British Public demand such stuff, and so it must be supplied. Let the reader bear in mind, however, that it takes a clever man to write entertaining nonsense. If he doubts my word, let him try to give an improvement on "Roast Pig;" one of the witty essays of the gentle "Elia."

A selection of Mr. Willock's contributions to *Ally Sloper* was made by the proprietors, and published as a Christmas Annual for 1891, under the title "Tarradiddles."

DAVID WINGATE.



D. Wingate

IT seems but a few months since we stood, with uncovered head, by the newly-closed grave of David Wingate, one of Scotland's genuine singers, a man, loyal in heart, subtle in fancy, and tender in all human feeling, and one in whose loss, not only the field of literature, but the

world at large, was that day the poorer. While we mourn the absence of his genial, kindly presence, we are comforted with the thought that his works remain with us. With an increased tenderness we turn over the leaves of his volumes, and anew wells up in our minds admiration for the delicate beauty of his verses, "In the Glen of Dalziel;" for his lines "Last Words," in which we hear the awful solemnity and earnestness of the dying wife's appeal to her thoughtless, drunken husband; for the true and artistic conception of a mother's love towards her wayward child which is pictured in his "Dorty Bairn."

David Wingate was a genuine poet, and, no matter what his position or surroundings in life may have been, he could no more refrain from giving his thoughts expression in imaginative and musical verse, than can the lark, which, from his cage on some window-sill, pipes out his full-throated carol, clear and distinct above the turmoil and noise of the busy street below.

He was born at Cowglen, in the parish of Eastwood, Renfrewshire, on the 4th of January, 1828. In his sixth year he was sent to the parish school, but his years of attendance there were of short duration, for we learn from a very appreciative article on our subject, by Mr. Alexander Lamont, that young David was only nine years of age when he, like his father before him, descended the shaft of the coal pit, and began thus early the struggle for existence. His father, four years before, had fallen a victim to that scourge of the coal mine, fire-damp.

The year 1850 marked an epoch in the life of our poet, for it was then he got married. It was in that same year that the late Hugh Macdonald, took notice of Mr. Wingate's verse in very appreciative terms in the *Weekly Citizen*. This was the first distinct evidence of appreciation that had been vouchsafed the young poet, and that the warm commendation of the genial-hearted "Rambler" was pleasing and stimulating goes without saying. David Wingate's life before this had been brightened but rarely by any glimpses of sunshine. Now, however, with his loving helpmate by his side, the future had a brighter aspect, and there was always the glance of his "little wife's" love-lit eye to encourage and cheer him on. True, the dark, dull clouds of

adversity lowered in the sky at times, and threatened to o'erwhelm them, but the rift was sure to appear sooner or later, with the cheering ray of sunshine struggling through, that showed them the way was clear, and the opening day big with God's promises.

A picture of one of these sad days,—when adversity seemed as if he had become a household fixture by the fireside, and with a vision as prepossessing as the “Brownie o’ Blednoch,”—has been preserved to us in the poet’s own words:—“Our family had been increased by the birth of a son—a little, dear, delicate child, happily not destined to endure the buffeting of a merciless world; and from him, his mother, and sister I was now to be parted for a week at a time. It was the first time I had come under that necessity. I knew that much thrift is not always the effect of dividing a family, and found that any increase of wages I might have by the change would be more than balanced by our living separately. However, I wrought from home for six or seven months, struggling hard to master the difficulties that fettered us; but at the end of that time, by Janet’s advice, I got work nearer home. Here, however, work soon failed, and I had to travel again. I went farther East, and, after working a week, during which I had to travel daily, through deep snow and severe frost, a distance of seven miles, I removed them Eastward also. The place was called Gartclose—a most miserable place. The style of work was new to me, and in endeavouring to keep up with my neighbours, I overstrained myself, and was in consequence once more thrown off work. We were in despair; for though I had contrived to keep myself in a Friendly Society, and from it had an alimēt of five shillings per week, what was that compared with the wants of four individuals? It proved ultimately that we had no occasion for despair, for an old acquaintance of mine, having heard of my illness, called on us, and judging rightly, from the fact of our setting nothing before him, that our circumstances were not good, offered to share his place with me. I could not hesitate for a moment in accepting his generous offer, for life seemed to be in it.” Where love reigns in the home, despair may attempt, but rarely does he gain a footing, even amid the sorest trials and afflictions.

David Wingate's lines ascribed to "My Little Wife," which appeared in his first volume of poetry published by Messrs. Blackwood & Sons, in 1862, drew from Lord Neaves the following flattering encomium, forming part of a very appreciative article on Wingate's poems which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* at the time of the publication of the book:—

"There are few verses in the language more pure, tender, and musical, nor any love-utterance we can remember more refined and delicate in its simplicity than this charming little poem. Montrose himself could not have set his lady more apart from all the soils of common thought than this collier-lover sets the humble maiden who has given him her modest heart. We know no sketch of morning love so guiltless of complications, and sweet with the dews of youth," and the verses which follow assuredly bear out these warm words of praise and prove them to be thoroughly warranted.

*My little wife often round the church hill,
Sweet little, dear little, neat-footed, Jane,
Walked slowly and thoughtful and lonely until
The afternoon bell chimed its call o'er the plain.
And nothing seemed sweeter
To me than to meet her,
And tell her what weather 'twas likely to be ;
My heart the while glowing,
The selfish wish growing,
That all her affections were centred in me.*

*My little wife once ('tis strange, but 'tis true),
Sweet little, dear little, love-troubled Jane,
So deeply absorbed in her day-dreaming grew,
The bell chimed and ceased, yet she heard not its strain.
And I, walking near her,
(May love ever cheer her
Who thinks all such wandering of sin void and free),
Strove hard to persuade her
That He who had made her
Had destined her heart-love for no one but me.*

*My little wife—well, perhaps this was wrong—
Sweet little, dear little, warm-hearted Jane,
Sat on the hill-side till her shadow grew long,
Nor tired of the preacher that thus could detain,
I argued so neatly,
And proved so completely
That none but poor Andrew her husband could be ;*

She smiled, when I blessed her,
And blushed, when I kissed her,
And owned that she loved and could wed none but me!

David Wingate has now stood in the forefront of our Scottish poets for over thirty years, recognised as a true poetic limner of peasant life, with its lights and its shadows, its deep, heart-stirring pathos and its pawky humour. His verse has ever given evidence of that manly, honest heart, that throbbed within his breast. Of his humble origin Mr. Wingate made no parade, and when at his first essay as an author, he wrote a preface for his little volume, he simply asked that it be put on the scale of public opinion, and allowed to live or die with the verdict it should justly merit. Of commiseration on account of his humble up-bringing he would have none. We cannot do better at this point than reproduce that preface.

“I confess that I see no reason why I should write a preface, and, unadvised, would probably have left it unwritten. But some friends—men of learning and taste—assure me it is absolutely necessary. What can I say? Shall I tell you I have no learning? The book itself will tell you that. Shall I whine, and say to my critic—‘Have mercy on me!—think of my position in life?’ No, indeed! On the contrary, I say, weigh the book alone. My peculiar circumstances (if they be peculiar) have no right to go in with it. If I have sung badly, or thought sillily, let it be no excuse for me that I am and have been a collier since my ninth year. Probably the fact of my being a collier should have been suppressed altogether; but I thought if any reader wishes to know what I am, the information is here for him. If the book has any merit apart from whatever that fact may suggest, it may live; if not, it deserves to die. If a groundless vanity has given birth to, and sustained my long-cherished dream of something better than the pit, do not hesitate to tell me so. It may serve to convince me that I am in my proper place, and teach me to be content. Heaven save me from that charity which refrains from calling me a blockhead because my face is covered with coal-gum! To those who have aided and encouraged me in putting my thoughts into this book form, I can only say—
Thank you sincerely,

“DAVID WINGATE.”

That David Wingate had a heart as kind and tender as a woman, we have only to turn to his poem "In the Glen of Dalziel," to find ample demonstration. He had heard of the death of "the Laird's sweet laddie-bairn," the only child of Lord (then Major) Hamilton of Dalziel, and the heart that dwelt 'neath the humble cottar's roof went out in loving sympathy to the bereaved parents who mourned the heir to their ancestral home. It was the one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin, for Mr. Wingate in his own early married life had lost his first-born son.

The poet has himself told us the circumstances attached to the writing of these lines. Having heard of the child's death, and being moved with deep sympathy, his heart prompted him to embody his thoughts in verse, but, somehow, he could not strike the proper keynote, till one day an accident took place at the pit over which he was overseer, and in order to repair the damage he had to travel on foot to a neighbouring town, and order material for the purpose of repairs. His way lay through the wood, and no sooner had he got beneath the shady branches of the tall spreading trees, and the ever-present love of nature had begun to assert itself, than the beautiful conception contained in the poem was presented to his mind, and before he reached his destination the verses were inscribed on the tablet of his memory, there to remain till the evening hours gave leisure for their committal to paper. Of all Mr. Wingate's poems this is our favourite. We quote it in full:—

IN THE GLEN OF DALZIEL.

"OH ! ken ye wha has left us?"
 Said the Woodroof to the Fern ;
 "Oh ! ken ye wha has left us?"
 E'en the Laird's sweet laddie-bairn,
 Never mair amang the starworts,
 In the sunshine he'll be seen,
 Wi' his han's as white's my petals,
 An' his bonnie glancin' een ;
 For they've laid him in the shadow
 That nae sunbeam lights, I ween.

Hae ye heard the waefu' wailin'
 O' the linties, Lady Fern ?
 Hae ye heard their waefu' wailin'
 For the Laird's lost laddie-bairn ?

E'en the kaes are chatterin' saftly,
 And the robin sings, *they say*,
 As he sings in dull October,
 When the grass is turnin' grey—
 As when ne'er a flower can hear him
 On a cheerless winter day.

Heard ye ocht like some ane sabbin',
 Lady Fern, fu' late yestreen,
 When the stars we saw were glimmerin'
 In the lift like tearfu' een?
 While the ivy leaves were flappin'
 A' along the kirkyaird wa',
 And the dew, like tears, about us
 Frae the trees began to fa'—
 Heard ye ocht like some ane sabbin',
 Lady Fern, yestreen, ava?

'Twas his mither's sel was passin',
 Wae and weary up the glen,
 In sic grief as only mither's
 Wha hae lost like her can ken.
 There are kindly hearts about her
 That to see her tears are sair;
 An' there's ae dear ane that blythely
 On himsel' would tak' her care;
 But the cup o' grief's nae sweeter
 Though a mournin' world may share.

Oh! gin we nicht but tell her,
 While she's wailin', Lady Fern,
 That the flowers she'll see neist summer
 But precede her bonnie bairn.
 We nicht wile her frae her sorrow,
 And wi' this nicht dry her e'e—
 He but lies a langer winter
 In the lichtless gloom than we,
 But the summer will be endless
 When your bairn you neist shall see.

There is a delicacy of execution in these lines that suggest the light touch of the artist, in whose work the subdued tints blend so perfectly as to deceive our eye, while we try to determine the different colours that make up the whole. Look again at that line, where the rough cawing of the rooks is softened and brought into harmony and sympathy with the subdued note of the redbreast,—

E'en the kaes **are** chatterin' saftly,
 And the robin sings, *they say*,
 As he sings in dull October.

The words we have italicised reveal a bit of rare artistic writing, to which our attention was directed by a friend of botanical tastes. The bloom of the woodruff is shed long ere October is reached, so that the plant could only *hear* of the sadder tones that haunt the robin's note at the fall of the year. The whole poem is like the soft under-breathings of the flowers in some deep-shadowed woodland glade, as they resume their low-toned gossip after the passing of the fairy cavalcade in a midsummer-night's dream.

It has been admitted that the writer who can interpret truly the feelings that dominate the mind of a child, is no tyro in his art, and in David Wingate's "John Frost," we have a rare picture of child-thought. The co-mingling of the "auld farrant" chatter of the little girl, the pawky humour, the heart-felt indignation and the simplicity of youth, have made this a doric classic, and the delight of all young readers.

The following comprise the various volumes of poems published by David Wingate. "Poems and Songs," 1862, with a second edition the following year; "Annie Weir and other Poems," in 1869; "Lily Neil and other Poems," 1879, all of which were published by Messrs. Blackwood & Sons.

In 1883, Messrs. Kerr & Richardson of this city, published a volume, entitled, "Poems and Songs," and again in 1890, the same firm sent out a volume of his "Selected Poems." Besides all this, the poet was a valued contributor to *Blackwood's Magazine*, *Good Words*, and other high-class monthlies.

Mr. Wingate was for many years an honoured and respected member of the Glasgow Ballad Club, and at one of the meetings held about five years ago, "Lines written during an illness on my sixty-fourth birthday," was the title of a poem sent in by our old friend, the meeting referred to having been held just five days after that anniversary.

To those who were present and heard the verses read—the last contribution by the aged poet—one couplet, in the light of subsequent events, has a very pathetic interest, being almost prophetic. The burden of the lines is—

But there's comfort in the thought
Of a dreamless sleep long sought.

JOSEPH WRIGHT.



Joseph Wright

WHAT Glasgow folks term *Fair Sunday* is usually witness to an unusual gathering at Vinegarhill; the temporary home of the buskin and the hose, where may be seen, during business hours, the ghost illusion, the abnor-

mally fat lady, tragedy, comedy, farce ; where your skill as a shot may be tested, or your correctness of aim ascertained, as you attempt a shot at the lovely features of "Aunt Sally."

On Sunday, however, all will be quiet, save for the tramp and chatter of those visitors who may come to have a look round on the cheap, whose curiosity, indeed, is more apparent than their coppers.

A keen observer may have witnessed during the afternoon an unusual bustle about one of the canvas theatres, and a peep into that same place later on would reveal the cheery, happy faces of hundreds of children, the offspring of those men and women who spend life in the caravan. Here to-day and away to-morrow, they are ever on the move, and new scenes and new faces wipe out the memory of the experiences of yesterday, and yet around the circumscribed walls of that home-by-the-road cling strong human ties. Through that little square curtained window the light has streamed in upon many a bit of unrehearsed tragedy. We are apt to forget this at times ; and, as we see these moving homesteads, through the association of ideas, we think only of the merry jester with his cap and bells, or of the juggling sire and his youthful progeny.

No one in our midst takes a deeper interest in the travelling showman than Mr. Joseph Wright. The sight of a caravan on the road awakens an interest in his breast that is only satisfied when he has found out something of the history of the travellers, and made himself their friend, and now, from long active interest in the social and religious well-being of these children of the road, his name is known and respected by all of them.

One has only to read one of Mr. Wright's articles on Life in the Caravan, to realise how close lies this subject to his heart.

The object of this article is to deal with Mr. Wright as a purely literary man, however, and to that phase of his many-sided character we must now confine ourselves.

That one who, when a lad, had literally sat at the feet of that "grand old woman," Janet Hamilton, the Langloan poetess, should himself write pleasing verse in "the braid auld Scottish tongue," is no matter of surprise

Many an hour has Mr. Wright spent with the old blind minstrel "at her ain ingle cheek" reading from her favourite authors. "During the reading," he says, "she would make me pause, to tell me something about the author, or point out the gems of the poem." To a person of literary tastes the hours so spent must ever remain green spots in the memory of the past. Janet was but eight years of age when she found a copy of Milton lying on the breast-beam of a loom in a weaver's shop, and getting a loan of the volume as well as a copy of Allan Ramsay's poems, she soon began, she said, "to appreciate the gorgeous sublimity of Milton's imagery and the grandeur of his ideal conceptions," and, ever after, "The Gentle Shepherd" was to her a pastoral symphony, the notes of which would often ring in her ear. Almost daily, during the busy years of her married life, Shakespeare was her study while her child lay sleeping on her knee.

What a grand literary upbringing this was for a lad of poetic tastes and sympathy. What a deep well he had to draw from in his intercourse with the aged poetess. His description of what occurred the first time he essayed to visit the poetess in her own home forms a fine word picture :

"I knew her son by sight, and her guidman John I had often met and spoken to, but I had never seen auld Janet, or 'Jenny,' as she was familiarly called. I had never been asked to visit her, and did not just exactly like to go up and say that I wished to see Janet, but I had made up my mind to see the poetess, and mustered up as much as would procure one of her volumes. I thought that would be a very reasonable excuse for a call, seeing they were to be had at the house. Consequently, I plucked up courage and made a pilgrimage by night. Having ascended the back stair, I reached the kitchen door, and, looking through the keyhole, saw a picture which I shall never forget. On the one side, in a large arm-chair, sat Janet—I knew her from the photographs I had seen with the black patch over the eye. On the other side sat her venerable-looking husband with "the big ha' Bible" on his knees. They were at 'the Books,' or as John himself would have said, 'takin' the Buicks.' At Janet's side sat auld John Crombie, the beadle in the Relief kirk ; James and Marion, their faithful son and daughter, sat

in the centre, and completed the picture. I have often, when reading the *Cottar's Saturday Night*, recalled the group round the fireside at Langloan. I stood rivetted to the spot, and 'took the Books' with them in spirit. If I remember rightly the hymn sung that night was

'O God of Bethel ! by whose hand
Thy people still are fed ;
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led.'

The simple service overawed me, and I could not think of disturbing the peace that was brooding over the quiet circle of devout worshippers. So I retreated, resolving to come again at a more convenient season. This was my first visit to Janet Hamilton."

Joseph Wright was born in Airdrie in the year 1848. Early in life he removed to the neighbouring town of Coat-bridge, and, after receiving his education at the Parish School, followed the business of umbrella manufacturing. Eleven years ago he commenced business in Glasgow.

He has ever been a busy man, in every sense of the term. During the day his unremitting attention to business has brought its own reward, and his leisure moments are spent, now in presiding over a Foundry Boys Society, or, at Vinegarhill grounds, attending to the comfort and welfare of the showmen's children, or again, by his own fireside, penning some Doric lilt, or giving, in quaint homely prose, a description of some incident his observant eye has noted in the byepaths of life.

Mr. Wright's grand-parents, on his father's side, were Celts from Cowal, near Inveraray—the name Wright being in Gaelic Macinthoor or Macintyre. On the paternal side Joseph Wright is from an old Lowland or Saxon stock—the Semples of Castle-Semple, in Renfrewshire. The original family lost their titles and estates through following Prince Charlie. The Semples have always been literary in their tastes ; one of the same line was the biographer of Robert Tannahill—David Semple of Paisley, the town from whence came Mr. Wright's parents.

Mr. Wright's claim to rank as a "Clydeside Litterateur," rests undoubtedly on his work as "the Boswell and warm admirer of Janet Hamilton." As already stated, his interest

in the poetess dates from his boyhood, and his zeal only reached a culminating point on the 16th of July, 1880, when a public fountain in memory of the departed bard was unveiled at Coatbridge, and the remarks of the Rev. Mr. Beaton on that occasion were justly merited. He said, "The leading spirit in awakening the public to the worth and merits of Janet Hamilton, and the mainspring of the active committee, was Mr. Wright. And if we feel," he continued, "that we have done well in dedicating this day to the memory of Janet, then Mr. Wright deserves our heartiest cheers, for to him we are principally indebted for leading us to perform this appropriate act of homage to womanly worth and poetic genius."

In March, 1883, when the late John Bright, M.P., came to Glasgow to deliver his address, as Lord Rector, to the students of the University, he spent the afternoon in visiting Mr. Wright privately at Coatbridge, and, after having tea together, they called on Janet's daughter, Marion, when the humble cottager, and the great statesman and orator spent an agreeable hour, and Marion repeated her mother's ballad, "Effie!"; Mr. Bright sitting in the most humble manner listening to the pathetic tale. Mr. Bright left well pleased with his visit, and richer by the possession of an autographic treasure in the shape of a bit of paper bearing Janet's own handwriting, as well as a finely bound copy of her poems presented to him by the subject of this article.

"Janet Hamilton and other Papers," published six years ago by Messrs. R. & R. Clark, of Edinburgh, is a dainty little volume, and contains some fine writing. There is an entire absence of "high falutin'." The book is dedicated "To the Right Hon. John Bright, M.P., who first made known to the English-speaking world the name and merits of Janet Hamilton," A copy of the volume reached the great statesman just a week before he died. As repeated references have already been made to the main part of the book, we cull from the "Other Papers" the following quotation from the article entitled "Sunday in an Old Scottish Village":

"Walking leisurely 'yont the road a wee bit' in his shirt sleeves 'to view the corn and snuff the caller air,' daunered Wull M'Lintock, with his hands at his back. Tam Watt, the beadle, has just passed down after ringing the bell and

seeing 'a' things richt in the kirk,' to wash himself and don his swallow-tail coat—a well-known coat in the village and in the regions beyond, having done duty at weddings, funerals, and carrying up the Book for thirty years and more, and withal looks 'nane the waur o' wear,' for, as Tam often said, it was 'guid stuff.' It is now eleven o'clock, and the church takes in at 'twal hoors.' My mother, who likes to be in 'braw time' so that she may have a quiet meditation among the tombs before the 'kirk gangs in,' is ready. We are soon on our way together to the house of God. In her hand she carries a 'wee bab' of spearmint and applingie, to be used discreetly during the services of the sanctuary. Ere long we reach the churchyard. On our way, however, several subdued cracks, as befits the hallowed morn, take place between 'antrin kirk-gaun folk' and my mother. We saunter from one headstane to another, reading the verses of poetry and Scripture texts once again, although we had them nearly 'a' aff by heart,' so frequently did we read them. We know, however, that Tam Watt has again reached the church, because the bell has begun to ring out its discordant notes, being 'a wee cracket.'"

There you have a mellow-toned but carefully drawn picture by an artist who understands his subject.

Mr. Wright's song, "Aye Work Awa," is a popular favourite on both sides of the Atlantic, and was classed by the late Professor Blackie in his latest volume as equal to Ballantine's "Ilka Blade o' Grass." "Aye Work Awa" has been reprinted four times by request in *The Scottish American*. His other favourite sacred song, "Ye're a' Welcome Hame," is sung wherever Scotsmen gather, and has been translated into French. In the last edition of "Whistle Binkie," Mr. Wright's two songs, "Aye Work Awa," and "Amang the Stooks" have found an honourable place.

WILLIAM HOWIE WYLIE.



Wm. Howie Wylie.

A GLANCE down the "Answers to Correspondents" column of many of our weekly newspapers and magazines, reveals the fact that not infrequently the editor is asked to advise on the best system of shorthand, and to give some hints as to the duties of a reporter.

With many young men the notion seems to be prevalent that phonography forms almost the entire stock-in-trade necessary for equipment in the ranks of the fourth estate, whereas, the man who would be a thoroughly successful

journalist must be possessed of a large fund of general information, acquired and tabulated in his memory, ready for immediate service. He must wield a facile, graphic pen, and be able to catch up at a glance the telling points of the scene that is passing before his eyes. Above all he must be able to "boil down" his "copy" so that what would have occupied a column of his journal shall be compressed into a third of its original dimensions, and still retain all the flavour of an extended report. In fact—to use a figure of speech—the newspaper reader of to-day has neither time nor inclination, 'mid the hurry and bustle, to assimilate the heavy food of a verbatim report, but must have his concentrated extract purveyed in dainty varied dishes. To sum up, the successful journalist is born not made, and the subject of this article is a case in point, for he early shewed exceptional aptitude and ability as a newspaper reporter.

The editor of an influential religious weekly, and one who knew his subject intimately, said of Mr. Wylie: "As a paragraphist we should think he had very few equals. He knew that a paragraph should be like good conversation. He extracted with unerring accuracy the point of a narrative, and his immense and varied knowledge of men, life, and literature enabled him to give everything a brightening touch. But his supremacy appeared in his descriptive reporting. He was a pioneer in this now popular style, and never, to our thinking, had a rival in it. If he went to a meeting he could reproduce the whole atmosphere, pick out every incident and every saying worth repeating, and if he chose, or rather, if good nature allowed him, accurately gauge every one who took part in it. On the whole he was a most genial writer, but he had no illusions. Overrated and trumpeted persons soon shrank to their true shape and size before him. His searching eyes undressed them."

Mr. Wylie was born in Kilmarnock sixty-two years ago. His mother was a descendant of the Howies of Lochgoin, and he was proud of his covenanting ancestry. When a boy, he obtained a situation in the office of the *Kilmarnock Journal*, and while in that employment became local correspondent for the *North British Daily Mail*, a connection that only ceased at his death. The story is told that a

representative of the *Mail*, when calling at the *Journal* office and enquiring for Mr. Wylie, was surprised when he was referred to a young lad, with an apron on, busy setting type at a case.

By his eighteenth year Mr. Wylie was reporting for the *Ayr Advertiser*, and he was barely twenty when he was advanced to the editorial chair. It was at this period of his career that the literary faculty in him became distinctly manifest by the production of a little book, entitled, "*Ayrshire Streams.*"

We next find him on the staff of the *Nottingham Journal*, and his residence in that historic town is marked by the publication of a valuable work, entitled "*Old and New Nottingham.*"

He then transferred his services to the *Liverpool Courier*, as sub-editor.

His next move brought him back to his native country with a new turn given to his thoughts and aspirations, and we find him a student of Edinburgh University, with the ministry as his main object in life. There his academic career was as brilliant as had been that of journalism in the years which preceded, and he soon rose head and shoulders above many of his *confrères*, and was elected President of the Dialectic Society; succeeding in that office Mr. Robert Wallace, the future Member of Parliament for East Edinburgh, a man who, like himself, came to have large experience alike in the pulpit and in the editorial chair.

Not only was Mr. Wylie a successful student, but during the years he attended the classes, the columns of the *Daily Express*, Edinburgh, and the *Falkirk Herald* were being enriched by his pen.

His career as a divinity student was brought to a completion at Regent's Park Baptist College, London, when he received a call to the Church at Ramsey, Huntingdonshire. After five years of incessant work in Ramsey, he accepted a call to Accrington, Lancashire, but had shortly after to resign owing to a breakdown of the physical machinery consequent on the severe mental strain.

He came north again and settled in Gourock with the view of recruiting his health. After a time he again attempted ministerial work, and was located for a short time in Blackpool, but feeble health again interfered, and he had perforce

to sever his connection with the Church, and for the remainder of his life journalism became his *only* profession; for indeed, he had never really lost touch with the press in all these years of unremitting toil.

He removed to London at that time and became House of Commons correspondent for several newspapers. He was also colleague to Dr. Bayne as sub-editor of the *Christian World*, besides being on the staff of the *Freeman*, the organ of the Baptist body. While in the metropolis he published his Bunyan Memorial Volume.

In the year 1879 failing health again gave unmistakable voice, and the mild climate of Helensburgh became for the future the environment of this indefatigable worker.

Three years later he took upon himself the duties of editor of the *Christian Leader*, and for some years prior to Mr. Wylie's death the property had been solely in his own hands.

The literary notes, which were a distinct feature in each Monday's issue of the *Mail*, were the work of Mr. Wylie, and the intimate knowledge of current literature, along with the piquancy of the articles, made many readers turn with zest to the column. He also contributed to the same paper, during the year 1879, a series of descriptive sketches of the "Castles and Mansions of the West."

William Howie Wylie's principal contribution to literature, "Thomas Carlyle: The Man and his Books," we are told, was written, printed, and published within the almost incredible short space of four weeks.

That such an excellent volume was written and produced in such a limited time goes to prove that had the author allowed himself the leisure to write an extensive and exhaustive life of our great Scotsman, material for which, we believe, was offered by Thomas Carlyle's sister, Mrs. Aitken, a still greater boon would have been conferred on students of literature in general, and on cultured Scotsmen in particular.

On the very threshold of Mr. Wylie's volume we note indications of the strong literary bias that possessed him while a young man, and which increasing years but helped to deepen and extend. He says: "It was with a positive thrill that, on a summer day, little more than twenty years

ago, two young students from Edinburgh, making their first tour on foot into England, read the name on that old, battered cart 'Thomas Carlyle, Nutholm,' as it went jolting painfully past a clump of pines." That name was enough to suggest to the minds of the two enthusiastic young travellers that they had now reached the confines of the Carlyle country, for he goes on to say, "From these hedges of thorn guarding our path, Thomas Carlyle, as a boy, had probably gathered the sprigs of 'May' in the early summer, and the ripe, if not luscious, fruit in the late autumn. In this very fir wood, who knows, he may have played with his school-mates, or rested, book in hand, on his lonely rambles."

The fairness of Mr. Wylie's estimate of Thomas Carlyle's influence on literature is to be found in this summing-up of his :—"Even where a protest has to be lodged by the judgment against Carlyle's doctrine, our feelings are always almost enlisted in his favour by our faith in the sincerity of his purposes, the singular purity and earnestness of his life, and the depth of his genius, to say nothing of the force and beauty of that utterance which are almost always so great as to overbear disapproval of the thoughts he utters."

Mr. Howie Wylie was an indefatigable worker, and yet, had he given himself more rest, both of body and mind, we might have looked for more of purely literary and enduring work. As has been already stated, his life of Carlyle but showed the stuff our late friend was made of, and the reader lays the volume down with a sigh of regret that the same hand did not portray in fuller detail the life of the man he loved so well.

THE END.





